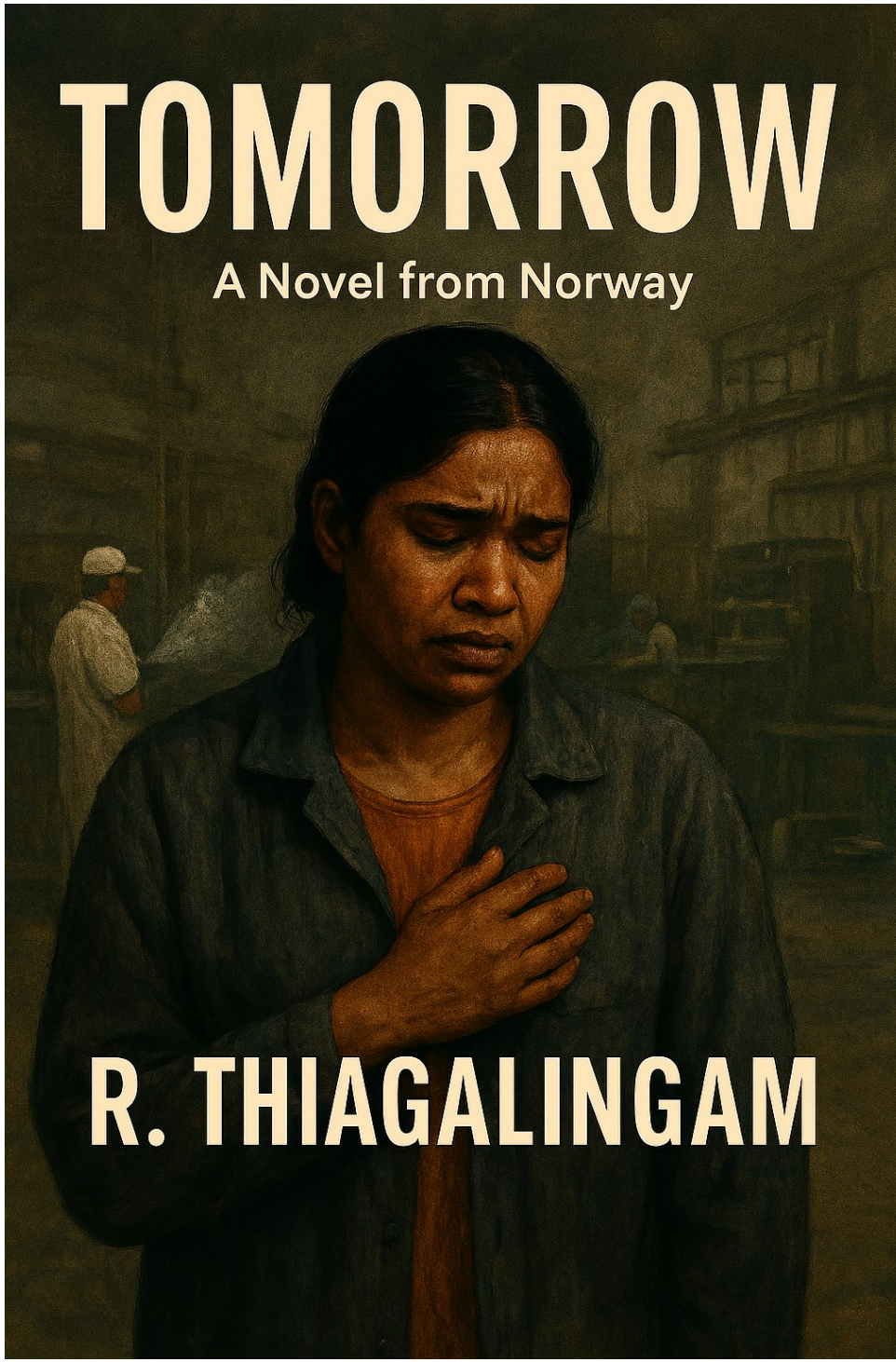
TOMORROW
A Novel from Norway
R. THIAGALINGAM

Tomorrow

(A new novel from Norway)
BY

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CHAPTER 1

IT was impossible to stand the continuous clean around her. However, such noise was part and parcel of her work. It was annoying that others were busy, seemingly deaf to the pressure washer's clamor.

What sort of people are they? Willing to do anything for the sake of money. The factory violates working conditions and rights. Not a grumble or protest. In Sri Lanka, the government repressed them. But here? We willingly came to this new land full of hopes under a free sky. Is freedom just a distant dream? Her thoughts meandered.

The ear is a part of the body. But it is not the body part that is hurt, the mind, which is more profound and more sensitive than the ear that is wounded. Hurting and harming are violence, Nithya's reasons. The human's imaginary world is very different from the realities of the actual world. Money was everything. Man has become a soulless machine, worshipping at the altar of money. The price of his soul is money? She could feel his musings influencing her. She could not alienate herself from them.

The box containing the fishes was now empty. Nithya pushed the box on the moving belt and started washing the table. Jeevita, who worked with a friend, came over to help haul the container onto the belt, and the job was speedily disposed of by them. She headed with a sigh of relief.

As soon as she came out of the production hall, she hurriedly ran toward the wardrobe, removed her white overalls and shoes, and stuffed them in the locker. Wearing her jacket and footwear, she turned around to her. Jeevita is already ignoring the others; they work still and with Nithya ready to go.

Nithya disliked this work. It was not easy to get a position according to people's education or choice. That is why she accepted this fish slicing job in the factory. After all, as the saying goes, BEGGARS CANNOT BE CHOOSERS.

According to modern European culture, one had to live where both husband and wife had to earn contribute to a reasonably comfortable life. One did not have to be clever, and a mind is not needed either.
Only her two hands were essential for this job. Even though the factory where she worked infringed the employment regulations, who would she fight them? She hated the factory.

Although it was eleven pm when they came out, it was still sunny, as it was summer. The sun's phenomenon at night during summer and darkness at daytime during winter in the Northern Hemisphere was a wonder at first, but they were now an ordinary seen.
Jeevitha was a lively girl:
She said, 'Nithya, sister!'
'Yes.'
'What has happened to the rest of them?'
'mmm'
'What do you mean, mmm?'
'They are doing what they think is correct?'

'So, do you agree with them? They go and ask for overtime. It is for the employers to suggest that. Even during recess, they are working. One could wash up at ten forty-five; they are still working at eleven o'clock. Therefore is why these fellows despise us. They think we are money-mad, so even the basic facilities need not given to us. Our suffering is of no account to them. Why can't they understand this?'
'They think if we earn more money, they can buy all they want. If we talk like this, our people will think we are jealous of them.'
'Isn't it a disgrace?'
'What is not a disgrace? In the first place, leaving our country itself is a disgrace. My husband said when we arrived here, it was the Norwegian who mostly worked in these factories. If the temperature were below seventeen degrees, the worker would be in the interval room. Now see what the story is? What redress have we?'
'This laicity in conditions is our people's fault.'
'Some Europeans have a low opinion of us. When our people also behave like this, they think of us as uncivilized. One thing must say many people value us as equals. We have to correct our faults and learn to live like respectable human beings. Do you think our people will change?'
'Sister, you are becoming emotional.'
'Emotional? Just thinking about it makes one mad?'

Jeevitha wanted to change the subject.

'Sister, I have heard you can write poetry?'
'I tell my husband that poetry has said goodbye in the stink of fish.'
'It is a gift to be poetic, and because you are angry with the pond, do you stop bathing there?'
'Proverbs of our country are not appropriate here!'
'Did you hear that at Vinayakam's house, they've brought jewels from Oslo?'

'Who are they trying to impress with all this jewelry? Why this craze for jewelry?'
'Are you shouting me as well, sister?'
'No, Jeevitha, it is just my opinion. As you are my good friend, I can speak freely with you. Others will say that I am jealous.'

They lived on an island. It seemed like two islands linked by a bridge. They had to cross this bridge to get to their homes from the factory. As they crossed the bridge and were on their way to their residences, they noticed them.
Jeevitha started shivering, Nithya observing this, tried to appear normal, even though she was scared herself.

There were four of them, young Norwegian men. Probably workers in some factories. They were seated on a low wall by the roadside, enjoying their beer.

'They mind their business. We will go our way', said Nithya.

Observing their fear, one fellow jumped down from the wall and came over the road. The others seemed to take his as a sign and followed suit.

Nithya felt that if all four of them spread their legs sideways and blocked the road, it would not be possible to cross them and proceed. What should one do? Turn back towards the factory? Awareness of our fear will reduce far their violence. With unexpected swiftness, the youth surrounded them. Nithya's fear changed to anger; lips trembled, and she glared at them. Observing this, one of them grinned with cruelty. He pushed his beer bottles near her lips and taunted her to drunk from them.

The legend of Kannaki flashed unto Nithya's mind. The King had beheaded her husband Kovalan as a thief caught selling one of a pair of anklets. She came to the court and broke the other anklet and showed the King that it was different from her husband's accused of stealing. Burning anger on her heart against particular injustice done to him because of a fire that engulfed the city of Madurai. Nithya had been to the temple dedicated to Kannaki near her hometown in her childhood. She perhaps remembered that great woman's fearlessness would help them escape somehow.

'Jeevitha, let us push that scrawny fellow at the same time and get through. Otherwise, they won't let us go.'
'I am scared.'
'There is no other way; they are drunk. We have to manage somehow to escape.'

Nithya started pushing the thin youth. Jeevitha, too, put in a spurt of strength and push hard. The human chain suddenly gave way in disarray. Nithya and Jeevitha used this opportunity to get away and started walking fast, almost running.

However fast as they walk, the hooligans were not about to let them go. They were annoyed that their barrier has broken through. Their anger fed from the amount of alcohol they had imbibed. They tried again to prevent them from leaving. With the mother hen's insolence trying to save its chick from the marauding hawk, Nithya again pushed the fellow blocking her path and walked fast.

Pushing boys provoked them into the misunderstanding that the woman was insulting them. This time there was no escape. They encircled both of them and poured the remainder of their beer over the woman as though anointing them. The odor of the bubbly liquid nauseated the woman. They felt utterly humiliated. The raucous laughter of the youth enraged them. Jeevitha cried out aloud. Have agony was hard to bear. Nithya thought she had to shore up the sagging movable of the other give. Amidst all this, Nithya's beer-soaked body was shivering in the icy wind. Perhaps the others felt that this was enough. With loud laughter, they moved away.

Nithya and Jeevitha walked with a sense of having escaped. Jeevitha went into her house. Nithya had to walk further on to get to her place.

Back in our country, could a drunkard have done such a thing and walk on the street the next day?
The peace and harmony that nurtured the land of our birth guaranteed women's honor. Why did we leave all that to come here and be harassed? Why? While such thoughts were chasing each other on Nithya's mind, Her anger and frustrations vented in the vehement banging of the door. All her suppressed emotions burst out as soon as she saw her husband. She put the thermos flask on the floor and started sobbing. Devaguru realized that some misfortune had occurred. Putting his arms around her, he gently consoled her, and removed her beer-soaked jacket, and threw it out in the bathroom. Even so, the alcohol odor still lingered. That home was unused to the smell of spirits.

It was some consolation to him that the children were in bed. He brought a towel to dry her hair, but she snatched it from and dried it herself, sobbing continuously. Devaguru could not stand it any longer. Making her sit down on the sofa, he asked,

'What happened, Nithya? How were you soaked in this beer?' His questions increased Nithya's distress, and her sobs' tempo grew louder.
'Don't cry so, Nithya. The children will wake up and be upset. First, tell me what happened. Sharing your distress with another will lessen the heartache.' Devaguru said in a pleasant tone.

Hiccupping intermittently, Nithya miserably related what had happened. Instead of answering, he sat in deep thought. She was annoyed by his silence.

'What is the point in simply sitting? Phone the police immediately,' she said.
'No, Nithya, let us give some thought?'
'What is there to think? They have way laid me; they harassed me, poured the beer over me, and humiliated me the dirty dogs. Instead of understanding my torment, you are just saying NO Nithya!' burst out Nithya. He kept quiet as though he thought he should let her anger and misery spend itself in heated words.

'What is the meaning of your silence?'
'Nithya, don't get agitated. To act hastily in anger is not wise. Supposing they were just enjoying themselves in high spirits. Think of it from the side?'
'Enjoyment? Who am I to them? They have humiliated your wife on a public road. Are you not a man?'

'Look here; A man doesn't have to jump around like a fighting cock. Who is going to benefit from my angry war dance? At times like this, one must not lose one's sense of proportion. We have to think. Will the problem be solved by our going to the police? A permanent enmity only will be the result of that. Any amity, benevolence, and peaceful relations will be blocked further. You say they were young and drunk as well. Once the effect of alcohol had worn off, they could even be ashamed of their deeds. We must remember that there are many probabilities in life.'

As though assuring her of his Love and protection always, he put his arms around her comfortingly.
She wriggled angrily out of his embrace and loudly demanded. 'What are you going to do now?'
He stood up and thought entirely walked up and down in the room. The silence annoyed Nithya further.

'Why won't you speak?'
'You are getting angry if I say something. I read a book a while ago. It is better to understand
the enemy rather than defeating him. Because the defeated enemy will want to recoup and fight
again. Whereas peaceful negotiations will overcome his enmity. Just think. Today you go to
the Police. Tomorrow they can inquire them. Do they murder someone? Then what will
happen next? They can insult you when they meet somewhere. Do we need this state of affairs?'
'Your philosophies are not practical for us. Now, are you going to come to the Police or not?'

'We cannot act reasonably while angry. Let us think clearly. Can we leave our two sleeping children alone, lock the house, and run to the police? Supposing they wake up suddenly and, finding us gone, start fretting. Let us think about this overnight. Afterward, if you still decide going to the police is the right thing to do, I will take leave and go with you.'
'Oh! Your assurance is fine.'
'OK, Nithya, get up and wash all this stink away in the bathroom. We will eat after that. I was waiting for you to eat together?'
'So… We are not going to the Police right now?'
'How many times am I to repeat? Let us decide tomorrow.'
'Wonderful man… They have married me a man who should have become a monk.'

Grumbling to herself, Nithya went to her bedroom. While Devaguru wondered whether she would lie down, she swiftly went into the bathroom. Observing this, Devaguru relaxed a little.

It seemed to Devaguru that the odor of alcohol was still permeating the room. He had traversed many ups and down in his life. There was a time when he believed that violence was the only path to freedom when he had thought of alcohol as a way of forgetting worries. But it was over like a flash of lighting in his life.

Now, he believed that he had found the right path and followed it with a firm conviction. Love and non-violence were the correct humanitarian approach to life was his belief. Putting this into practice brought many problems daily. But dealing with this problem only is strengthened to let some air in it. The fresh breeze seemed to soothe him. He sat on the sofa and closed his eyes.

'Nithya has been humiliated. It has left a deep scar in her mind. How to remedy that? Would the Police action be a cure for her wounded mind? Would any Police action cause similar pain in those who had caused hers? Would it benefit humanity to call 'eye for an eye?' in vengeful enmity? Why are people hesitating to accept the miracles of Love? Is the Gandhian way not suitable for the present time?'
'Are you going to give Gandhi new life? Come, let us eat.'
Nithya's anger seemed to have subsided somewhat to his relief.

After dinner, they went to bed. Devaguru did not want to resume the conversation and, more profound, her trauma.

'Sleep is God's gift. It will heal many mental wounds' thus, thinking Devaguru fell asleep.
But Nithya could not sleep. Devaguru had explained Gandhian ideas to her many times, but she was not attracted to them yet. She felt it was too archaic and not practical for modern times. Anyway, having been brought up in Jaffna's culture, she never debated his principles with him. She was afraid that argument would crack the family harmony. But she was not prepared to forgive the insult she had suffered that day. She was firm in her belief that those four Norwegian should be punished somehow for their deeds. Otherwise, she was afraid there might be more harassment and humiliations in the Vardø. She concluded that action should be taken by complaining to the police.

'Are you taking leave tomorrow?'
'Why?' He asked sleepily.
'To go to the Police!'
'There is no need to go to the Police.'
'If we nothing to do this, tomorrow they will drag me by my hand and abduct me. Then you can sit and talk philosophy?'

'We must train our minds to think positive. That way, only good will happen.'
'If you are not prepared to come, leave it. I will take someone else and go.'
'If you insist on jumping into the well, what can I do? Alright, as you wish. Have to go to work in the morning, let us sleep.'

Not wishing to continue the conversation, he turned over and fell asleep immediately. Coming to a decision, Nithya set the alarm clock and closed her eyes.

*

They woke up to the sound of the alarm in the morning.

Nithya had tea ready by the time Devaguru had finished his morning routine. It was pleasant to drink the hot tea. He left for work, thinking that she looked calm. She remained silent. On his way to work, he thought of Nithya with concern. 'She is, after all, an average woman. She came to this country with many desires and dreams. Problems had no place in those dreams. Poor girl, she will slowly learn about the new circumstances. Must buy a car soon. There will be fewer problems if she travels by car. I thought it was an unnecessary luxury. But now the necessity has arisen.' Waves of such thoughts assailed him as he walked.

Malathi goes to the school Today. Nithya woke her and baby Kokila, and she gave them their baths and got them ready.

She rang Venkatesh and told him about the incident. Although he asked many questions, he agrees and arrived without delay. Asking Malathi to look after the baby, she left with Venkatesh in the car. They spent more than one and half hours in the Police Station. She cross-questioned repeatedly. By the time she finished writing the complaint sheet, she felt she had enough. She was even beginning to wonder whether her husband could be right.

But on the other hand, her judgment that her course of action was correct did not impress her. Nithya returned home. The baby was asleep. Malathi was playing with the neighbor. She was relieved that there were no problems at home. Malathi was pleased to see her mother.

'Mother, where did you go with uncle?'
'To the Police.' she said and immediately bit her tongue.
'Why did you go to the Police?'
'That dear was because they were harassing me in the street.'
'Will the Police catch those people?'
'Yes.'
'Mother, I am hungry. It is getting late to go to school.'
'Today, no need to go to school. Stay at home and study.'

Feeling guilty for having gone without feeding the child, she quickly served the food.

*

Devaguru returned from work, had a bath, and entered the sitting room. He found Malathi busily drawing something. He was curious to see what was keeping so keenly occupied and peeped over her. She was drawing two figures. When Malathi observed that her father was looking at her drawing, she smiled.

'What is this picture, dear?'
'I am drawing the Police.'
'Why? Do you like the Police?'
'Mother went to the Police.' It was receiving a hard blow to his head. Without betraying his shock, he asked her.
'Who did she go with?'
'With Venkatesh uncle.'
'He sat next to the child.'
'Daddy! are you not going to eat?'
'I am not hungry, dear.'
'Why? Did you eat at the restaurant?'
He smiled without answering.

*

Nithya returned home from work. She was shocked to find the food untouched. There was no reply to her query why he had not eaten. She repeated her many times, but he was silent as though he was deaf. Suppose she did something contrary to his wishes. It was his way to keep quiet.
Guilty conscience bothered her.
'Please forgive me. Don't show your anger by not eating.'
'I am not God to forgive you, Nithya. I am just a human being. You have every right to go to the Police. I am not saying that it was wrong. Things did not happen as I wished. So, I am the guilty one. I have every right to punish myself. I shall fast for three days.'
'Why are you so cruel?'
'It is not cruelty. I have to purify my mind. That is all!'

She knew nothing she could say or do to persuade him to change his mind.

*

What Nithya hoped for did not happen. The Police did not take action as she expected. The youth, in their drunken exuberance, had just teased her. This woman did not understand that. They had not touched her. The other woman Jeevitha who had accompanied her, had not made any complaint. Nithya had overreacted and had resorted to extreme measures by the protest. The Police decided not to magnify a minor issue. 'A letter saying' as there is not sufficient evidence the complaint dismissed!' She was ashamed to show the letter to Devaguru.

CHAPTER 2

THIS chapter is about the lifestyle of Devaguru's birth country.

The crown of Lanka is the Jaffna peninsula. The seven gems that longed to adorn that crown were the islands off the peninsula's coast. One of them, rejecting the designation as an island, preferred the refinement of being called a town. That is Karainagar.

The rice fields could cultivate only a part of the year. Agriculture was burdensome and unprofitable. The sows of the soil went to the south as merchants. They pursued their commercial enterprises with hard work and vigor and succeeded. Among them, people like 'Badulla Murugesu' and 'Bandarawela Chellappah' became well known for their success. The beauty of Karainagar was added to by the houses that rose as a measure of their prosperity.

There was no dearth of natural beauty either. There was always a cooling breeze that came off the sea from all directions.
The Ponnalai bridge connected with the Jaffna Peninsula like a straight line across the sea seemed to prove that Karainagar was indeed a town and not an island. North of the island is the vast white sands of Casuarina beach. The Casuarina trees and the sweet scent screw pine bushes away to the ocean's breeze producing natural music. Tourists flock to enjoy all this in large numbers. The Palmyrah toddy season brings the local people too to revel in it. They would seek the beach to indulge in the Jaffna delicacy Palmyrah root soup and the exhilaration of toddy.

Back to the beach is VadaKadu. The Chidambaram of Eelam, which symbolizes the Hindu religious devotions of the Karainagar citizens, is situated here. The annual festivals of the temple celebrate every December. The zenith of the festival is the car festival. It would seem like the whole Peninsula had come together like a honeycomb. People from Moolai, Chuzhipuram, Vattukotti, Manipay, and other places fulfill their vows. The streets surrounding the temple would be like a giant bazaar. Many different types of Kavadis go in procession around the temple, decorated with peacock feathers, flowers, and milk pots, arranged in various designs they carried on devotees' shoulders with favor. Many others fulfill their vows, enduring physical pain.

There is a warehouse port on the way to Kayts south of the island. To utilize the Port's facilities and improve the neighboring areas' economy, Ceynor established Ceylon and Norway's collaboration.

Ceynor is a factory to builds fishing boats. The fisherman granted loans to acquire the vessels in the vicinity of Ceynor, a Sri Lankan navy camp installed without publicizing their ulterior motives. It was supposed to control the smuggling activity in the area.
Later, when the Sinhala Chauvinistic domination imposed a war on the Tamil areas, this navy camp was changed as its nucleus and swallowed most coastal areas and brought them under its insolent rule.

There were no drinking water wells in all the parts of the island. It was primarily saline. But three areas had good water, but Vellalar (high caste) was allowed to take water from their well, and others must only tack their separate well. Even those who screamed on public platforms that the 'Sinhalese are crushing us. In these no end to this tyranny?' did not ask whether there was any justice in treating a section of their people born of the soil as low caste and treat them as slaves. Is their outrageous stand that the Jaffna soil and the excellent water wells belong to the gospel that the whole of Sri Lanka belongs only to the Sinhala Buddhist goigama caste people refuted?

The lands outside the paddy fields were only allocated to the minority Tamil's to live. In South Africa, apartheid had failed. But in Karainagar, the apartheid based on caste? It was the time when Devaguru as a youngster wishing to a hero, was growing up in Karainagar.

He was full of romantic thoughts day and night. In his imagination, his Asia bicycle was the cupid's chariot. Cycling up and down the roads where pretty girls lived was considered a dashing achievement. He thought riding the bicycle without touching the handles, and similar stunts would impress the girls as heroes when they encounter him on the streets. He believed that rowdy behavior was manliness and that girls loved such men. He cultivated his hero image by entering other classrooms and trashing the boys there.

He became proud of this rough conduct. When his fellow students praised them, still, he was inwardly afraid that there would be a calamity if the school authorities and the elders at home got to hear of this violent activity. Secretly he wanted to prove his heroic mettle in a big way and hoped for such an opportunity to present itself. Even though thoughts of Love and heroism were troubling him, he did not forsake the forthcoming examinations.

That day Devaguru went to school as usual. Pleasure and excitement were going to school. It was delightful to look at girls chatting to his friends while pacing the school's verandas, and roaming around the town was a joyous and satisfying experience.

The midday interval was over, and the erudite teacher was conducting the religious class. He captivated the youngsters by his religious stories interlaced with sexual themes. It should not misunderstand as a vulgar subject. Religion is to show the way to bliss. One could measure the more incredible spiritual bliss by experiencing earthly pleasures.

Ordinary people cannot evaluate the wondrous mystery of the almighty. Creation is God's will. Human union and relationships are the first steps towards it. The next step is to experience the relationship between the Creator and the human being. He would go on to explain, throwing out all objections. It was in his class that this happened.

Four smart young men walked suddenly into the school, went into each classroom, and threw some pamphlets. It was like a tornado appearing and disappearing in a moment. The pamphlet distributors' swiftness and motivation raised them to the heroes' level. Everybody was discussing them. Devaguru read one of the leaflets.

It was the voice of the youth's boiling resentment against the government's oppression and violence. It itemized the violence let loose on the public at night by the Karainagar Naval camp. What considers to be rumors were proved with facts. If the cruelty and tyranny of the Navy not confront, the whole of Karainagar would become a significant Naval Camp, it warned. The pride and the horror of the land can be preserved only by the youth's bravery, the pamphlet debate. Such truths awoke the slumbering discernment within Devaguru, transforming him into a different person.

Julius Caesar, in victorious arrogance, is said to have exclaimed, 'I came, I saw, I conquered' would the Sri Lankan Navy crow triumphantly thus stand on the Ponnalai bridge? Thoughts of Love during adolescence were vulgar. Devaguru wondered with guiltily whether he had wasted his time and energy on it instead of loving his land and people. It seemed his heart was craving and thirsting for a new meaning of life.

While concerns for the new meaning were growing, he passed the tenth form, which pleased his family. The next step was the University entrance. His school did not teach the subjects he needed for the course, so he joined Karainagar Hindu College, which was way to the Ponnalai bridge.
He made new friends there. Many pupils were versed in politics and the events in the country. After school, they would meet and discuss the increasing violence everywhere. They seemed to have lost all confidence in the Tamil politicians, who seemed powerless to take any positive action against the growing ferocious Sinhala Chauvinism. They were successful only in fanning Tamil racism's flames against Sinhala racism. They translated this Tamil commerce pride into a vote bank. Once they became members of Parliament, They spent their time finding a few young men jobs and some business people lucrative concessions from the Government.

They spoke volubly in Parliament and got those published in the Tamil papers establishment their heroism. While they were making speeches at public meetings, extolling the history of the might and bravery of the ancient Tamils. The Sinhalese neatly succeeded in executing their well-laid plans. Half the Tamils were labeled as stateless state laborers and deprived of their voting rights: Sinhala only was proclaimed as the state language, stuffed down the unwilling throats of the non-Sinhala people. Stand ordination introduces to prevent the educational advancement of the Tamils. In the North and Eastern Provinces, the Tamils' traditional lands were colonized and settled with Sinhala thugs and convince. In the Eastern province, two new Sinhala constituencies create by lands robbed from the Tamils. The land area connecting the North and the Eastern regions was changed from its Tamil name to Sinhala and related to the valiant Tamils of South Vavuniya, thus creating another Sinhala pocket amidst Tamil areas.

Even though the Tamil politicians were well aware of all these schemes, they wasted their time talking insincere rhetoric and doing nothing. The agreements they signed with Sinhalese leaders were thrown into the dustbin even before the ink had dried on them!.

To save the lands, rights, and self-respect of the Tamils, the youngsters had no recourse but to become fighters with guns. Non-violence is understood only by human beings. The students studying with Devaguru suddenly stopped coming to college and were reported to have joined the liberation movement.

It happened while all this was creating a varied chemical reaction in Devaguru's mind.

They were advertising the screening of three films. That's are Thee (Fire), Theerpu (Judgement), and Thangapathakkam (Gold Medal) in the Television. Since he had missed the 'Gold Medal' when it screened in the theatre, he decided to watch the Television show that started at seven pm and ended at 3 am. It was some distance from his home to where the film show. He was perturbed about the late hour and the family's displeasure, so he pedaled his bicycle hard to reached home. Street lamps were dim when he approached the Gemini shopping center. Suddenly powerful lights blinded his eyes. Next moment armed navy men were blocking his way.

'Get off the bike!' roared one of them.

Before he could bring the bicycle to a standstill, another fellow jumped and kicked the bike hard. Devaguru was thrown off the bike and fell with a thud on the road. One fellow caught hold of his collar and asked him, 'Where have you been? Get your identity card out!'. In his hurry to get to the film shows, he realized that he had forgotten to bring the identity card with him. When they saw that he was blinking without replying, one fellow rammed the butt of the gun sharply in Devaguru's stomach. Unable to bear the excruciating pain, he cried 'Amma' and fell to the ground. Two of the navy men dragged him by the collar to the Gemini shopping center and, pointing to the notice posted on the wall, asked him, 'Who pasted this?' 'I don't know,' he truthfully said. 'Pariah Tamil' screamed one of them and again rammed the handle of the gun ferociously in Devaguru's stomach. It seemed to pierce his abdomen and spine. He fell on the ground twisting with unbearable pain.

Then a senior officer of the group came over and signaled the others to stop hitting him and said. 'In the future, if you come without your identity card, you will be shot and thrown into the sea. Now go. getaway.'

He walked home, wheeling his bicycle, with the unbearable physical pain and humiliation inflicted on him. At that moment, he decided to join the liberation movement and annihilate the Sinhala States armed reign of terror from Karainagar soil.

CHAPTER 3

NITHYA had gone to work. Malathi did arithmetic for a while. Devaguru thought she was good at it. It was his wish that she should be taught Tamil during leisure hours. Both Nithya and he taught her Tamil. He insisted that she grow up with a Tamil identity, and Tamil's knowledge was essential for that. The Tamil Association also stressed the same point. In some countries, the Tamil Associations taught Tamil to children foremost of their service objectives. They were going to teach Tamil in schools which was a heartening beginning.

Tamil families spoke Tamil at home. The children found it difficult to pronounce the words correctly, as their primary school language was Norwegian. They found it difficult to differentiate the Tamil and Norwegian words daily.

Because of Devaguru's untiring efforts, Malathi was somewhat able to identify Tamil alphabets and read and pronounce them correctly. But she still needed more coaching. Devaguru never tired of getting down books from India and Sri Lanka to improve Tamil's knowledge. He always requested his friends who went to India to bring books for Malathi. Some of them mocked him about this behind his back.

Malathi fell asleep on his lap. She has no worries now and does not know the land of her parent's birth.

She knows nothing of the beliefs and traditions there. But she must not only understand but be conditioned to love and respect them. We would, as parents, fail in our duty if they, not adequately taught to do so. They should return to our land of birth and live as patriotic Tamils there. Living like that should be the principle of every Tamil living abroad. Such thoughts enveloping him, he fondly caressing his daughter, carried and gently laid her on her bed. Returning to the sitting room, he put the TV on, reducing the volume. He never failed to watch the news whenever possible. Keeping oneself informed of the world news made a person complete some orientation was his opinion. It is convenient to watch the news on TV. It is like seeing events live.

N.R.K (The Norway State Broadcasting Corporation) erratically televised the news. In between local news, Suddenly they will show a piece of foreign news. Then they would return to the local news. Devaguru could not understand why they did this. The news switched from foreign to local attracted the attention of Devaguru. With the caption NEO-NAZIS in Oslo, it went on to give further details. There had been a protest rally by the Anti-racists, an anti-Nazi youth group. They had discovered the building where the Neo-Nazis were living. The latter had thrown stones and other missiles from inside against the protesters that could cause grievous bodily harm. News shows at the beginning. Then the police arrived on the scene and demanded that all the NEO-NAZIS inside the building come out. Instead of submitting to the order, the Police pelt with stones and sharp instruments. The Police then threw tear gas bombs inside, restrained the youth, and arrested them. One of them had been a thirteen-year-old girl. The Police scooped up guns, knives, axes, and other such sharp instruments, computers, files, and much different stuff from the building.

When Devaguru looked at the little girl who identified herself as a NEO-NAZI, he lost interest in the program's rest.

'What could a young child of thirteen know about historical truths? Did she analyze and research them and then joined the NEO-NAZIS? What did Hitler and Mussolini achieve? Italians killed Mussolini like a dog, who then hung his body upside down. Hitler boasted that the Germans Aryans would conquer the whole world. He swore that he would annihilate the Jews. Hitler treated them like animals. He sent thousands of them to the gas chambers creating mountains of dead bodies. Eventually. The civilized world is trying to forget these despicable and most tragic stains in history. At this time, the advent of the NEO-NAZIS… Are they going to destroy the remaining Jews? Is that possible when they have a country of their own? Or, are they going kill the Asians and Africans who have sought refuge in European countries from the man hunting of the Politicians of the newly independent countries, who refuse that freedom equally to all born on that soil?

As science and technology advances and the ability to destroy humankind with new weapons grows, has the human ethos shrunk to a minuscule size? The rich countries manufacturing armaments pour oil on the raging civil wars. Are those powers that were promoting the NEO-NAZIS and such destructive elements? In the name of democracy, it is plutocracy that fostered. Comfortable lifestyles increase with the forgetting progress of science. Are we forgetting our duty of caring for the younger generation in our enormous of those luxuries? What is unrestrained freedom? Is it to go back to wearing grass and leaves and living in caves? Have rights and independence severed relationships? The streams that join the clean river will be purified. But if those streams mingle with polluted water?

Has humankind got anything from at least the last two World Wars? Why do they spend billions of money producing deadly weapons that would create massive destruction and chaos? It's the rich countries and even the Indian subcontinent where millions live under the poverty line. Is it necessary to produce nuclear weapons?

In the land where Mahatma Gandhi was born, the jubilation over. The production of nuclear bombs hurt him. He switched off the TV and walked into the children's bedroom. Watching them sleep, he thought there was divine luster in their innocent faces. It says that each man has a world within himself. A man's individuality is comprehensive as the world. How many billions of such individuals make up humanity? Where does uniqueness end, and where does life within society begin?'
He rubbed his daughter lustfully.

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On this island was a house painted blue, facing the beach, set apart from the other homes.
There were four people in that house. Kjell seemed to be their leader, and his shiny, shaved head gave him a particular malevolent look. The harshness of his face was perhaps due to the arrogance and hatred in him. Harald's hair was naturally fair. But he had dyed it green. He wanted his hair to look different from others and his heart burning with enmity against people. He seemed the shortest of the four.

Alfred did not claim any individuality through the colors of his hair. His hairstyle was similar to that of the average Norwegian. But it's was a little longer reaching his shoulders. His torn clothes were not the result of wear but part of a distinctiveness pattern.

Only Jon looked normal. In a crowd of Norwegian, he could meet into them defying identification. Jon contrived this normality. He was the terrifying racist among the four of them. He was a die-hard racist who felt that only white-skinned people had the right to enjoy the world's power and affluence.

If each man was a separate world, four worlds gathered there. But since their beliefs were identical, they wanted to act as a team.

One cannot separate the Norwegians and coffee. The fragrant smell of coffee is always present in their homes. But it was the odor of alcohol that pervaded this blue house. They must have imbibed quite a lot judging by the number of empty bottles heaped in a corner. As though he disliked the silence in the room, Kjell suddenly said, 'We taught those two a good lesson.'
Jon agreed, 'they were terrified. In future, they won't think walking alone.'
'In a way, it seemed like a sin.'
'No, just a thought.'
'They should be kept in their proper places. Otherwise, there will be problems.'
'Now it seems they are driving around in a car.'
'They should shiver with fright daily. Only then will Tamils see the way.'

They drank another round of liquor. The theme of boys' conversation changed.

'Did you watch yesterday's T.V news?'
'Which one?'
'They have set three Tamils ablaze in Germany. Only then will they run back to their country. Otherwise, it won't work.'

'Wherever one turns, you see these black dogs. I want to beat them to death when I see them.'
'There are so many problems created by these people.'
'The schools their children go to are stinking with garlic.'
'There sort want to come to the discos too.'
'They came with nothing. Now Tamils people have cars, houses, money in the bank. Here we are looking around for jobs.'
'Just a few came at first. Now, these are about two or three hundred. After a while, Tamil people will take over Vardø, it would seem.'
'Why not? Our people have one child at the most two. These fellows produce five, six, and multiply fast.'
'They are all being taken care of with our tax money.'
'We know how they lived in their beggarly country! Here they are running in the fast cars.'

In the middle of this interlocution, Jon raised his voice and shouted!

'They should be trashed and chased out. Norway is for the Norwegians. Not for the alien dogs. This herd of pigs must run to the forest.'
'Kjell cried enthusiastically. 'Jon, the best way, it seems to me, is to burn them along with their houses.'
'No! we can't do that. Vardø is a small place. We will get into trouble, and we should deal with each of them separately. We should continuously harass them without getting into trouble ourselves.' Harald amended.
'Alfred asked, 'why don't we print and distribute pamphlets?'
'Yes, but to whom and how?'
'To the Tamils, of course!'
'What do we say in the pamphlet?
'We will warn the pigs to get out of the country, or else, we will burn you to cinders.'
'It is a good thing that Kjell has a computer and writer here.'

'Good idea. If we decide what we are going to write, we can start work immediately.'
'We should deliver them stealthily, after midnight.'
'Yes, we must not get caught by the Police.'
'We have to be careful.'
'O.K. Enough of chatter. Let's decide what to write.'

They were quiet for a while. Kjell brought the paper and pen. Jon broke the silence,

'There is no need to be civil to these avaricious pigs.'
'Alright, you dictate. I will write.'

After a few corrections, they finalized the messages in the pamphlet.

Pigs, get out!
Norway is our country, and our country is only for us. There is no place for you here. Here is the first warning for you. If you don't heed this, do you know what will happen? Just like in Germany, your houses will burn. You are going to roast like pigs inside them. We warn you! Get out as soon as you can out of our land.

Norway is for Norwegian!

They were satisfied with their efforts, and they reread it on the computer. The title was 30 points broad. The contents were 20 points. Norway is for Norwegian was 25 points. One hundred copies they printed out with the laser writer's aid. They all looked pleased and excited. They waited till one A.M. and divided themselves into pairs. It was very dark outside when they took the notices and left the house. Alfred and Jon went in one direction, and Kjell with Harald walked in the other.

The Tamils' habit was to open their letterboxes daily to see whether any letters had come from Sri Lanka. That day this printed leaflet was also among them.

When Nithya read it, she was distraught and angry. She was incensed that anger would only subside if she had a weapon in her hand and shot the author. But this fury was only for a moment; then it changed to helplessness and distress. She got ready to go to work. She usually left after Devaguru returned home. As he arrived saying 'See what those rascals have written!' she left. Devaguru read the notice and calmly pondered the composition of the message.

There was anger, ignorance, and narrow-mindedness. There was a despotic woven into it. To treat the Tamils with disrespect and force them into submission through terror was also in it. He could not gauge who wrote this or the numerical strength of those behind it. Anyway, he was worried about the repercussions caused by this leaflet. Just as he expected, the flyers created a stir among the Tamils. He heard that different opinions circulated.

'This is his country. That is what he says.'
'This is the work of a few vile people who are trying to scare us.'
'What if the incidents in Germany happened here? Instead of disgrace, better go back.'
'People here are kind. They have humanitarian values. Just because of a few scoundrel's actions, it does not mean all the others are like that. What will they do to the mischief that some gossips do?'
'Whatever it is, you have to pinch it in the bud. It is dangerous if anything grows.'

Amidst such varied opinions, the idea of calling a meeting of the Tamil Association grew strong.

Satkunam, who was the President, arranged for a meeting of the Association on Saturday evening. A large crowd came to the meeting as though representing all the families. Most of them were emotional. Devaguru noticed that some of the angry young men were muttering about retaliation. He thought this meeting would be helpful to channel their emotions. He took a seat at a side, observing the proceedings quietly.

The meeting began.

Satkunam unexpectedly said, 'I propose Devaguru as President for this meeting concerning the current problems.' Ragu stood up and seconded the motion. 'Devaguru was considered to be an upright man.' Satkunam also believed that he would analyze the problems profoundly and with acumen. Devaguru was embarrassed. He hesitated.

But the people in the assembly vociferously approved the proposal. After that, as he did not want to insist on the people's respect and trust, he went up and sat in the vacant chair next to Satkunam. 'Thank you for asking me to preside over this problem. The subject that affects us can now affect us more in the future. We should not allow our emotions to rule us. I would request that we approached the problems with wisdom and judgment. The enmity is yet small and at the beginning stage. Everything too should be taken into account!' Said Devaguru and sat down.
'There is nothing small or big about enemies. Like this is how in Germany, our people did nothing. You know what happened subsequently!' Amuthan spat fire. He had the reputation of being hasty and an extremist.
'I agree with Amuthan. We have to take some action.'
'If we bow down, they will keep on knocking us down. Is this not what happened in the land of our birth?' Said Arjun.

Tamil people esteemed him that he is bold and a daring man of action.
'Why not ask for Police action? This campaign is instigating the people against us. The Police must give us protection,' Ragu said.
'Oh, Yes! In our motherland too, didn't we know of the protection the Police give us?' Arjun said sarcastically.
'Brother Ragu wants to go to the Police. We don't know who printed and distributed this notice. If we complain that some steal a tire, they say, 'tell us whether you know who stole it!. If we give them this notice, they will say the same thing. This act is a waste of time and energy. It won't work.' said Satkunam and sat down.

After this speech, there was silence for a while. Then murmurs of chatting to each other started.
At this point, Devaguru stood up and spoke calmly, enunciating each word.

'We are emotional. Let us relax our mental tensions first. I will tell you a story. We all know about the great poet Bharathiar. There is a book about him titled 'Barathi who composed Ponchali's vow.' He was a patriot who supported India's national struggle for independence. He roused the people to show anger against oppression. He was not against violence. I remember the sentences an English lady spoke to Bharathiar. 'War will never benefit. One war justifies another. Those who lost will want their revenge on the victorious. Love and non-violence are the only way to peace and not anger and war.' He stopped and noted the assembled reactions, particularly Arjun and Amuthan. As they were silent, he continued, 'There is no point in getting angry just because they have printed these notices and put them in our letterboxes. We must try to understand their problems first.

We must act to understand the enemy's mentality. If we want revenge, it will become a continuous story. Do you think we can guard ourselves against adversity by revenge?'

'We must teach them that we are civilized people. That is important. I will give you an example you know well. Can we fall and bite the dog for that, biting us? I want to place an idea before you on your behalf. Please examine this idea. We will write an open letter to the good-hearted people of Norway. We will explain to them concisely about our sufferings in the land of our birth, why we had to come here as refugees. People from here once immigrated to America. How would they have felt if the other Americans had threatened them with violence? We will ask them questions that will stir their humanitarian values. They must understand that the difference of color between us is not our fault.

We have come to this country with trust in their kindness. We will explain that harassing and humiliating us is not keeping with this country's generosity and civilization. We must place before them in our fears and distress that will touch their hearts. Some of us can set together and prepare such a pamphlet and distribute it. We will see what sort of a reaction this receives and then decide on the next step.'

Devaguru stopped speaking and looked at the assembly. Satkunam was delighted. He had expected Devaguru to put forward some good practical scheme, and that was why he had asked the latter to chair the meeting. Most of the people there nodded their heads in agreement with his suggestions.

'Will this work? If we leave it mildly like this, won't they try to be funny with us?' Amuthan wondered.
'Let us try this approach first. We will observe the reaction,' said Satkunam.

'We should attach their leaflet too with ours. Then only the Norwegian will understand the whole thing.' Arjun said. This suggestion was also accepted, satisfying the young men.

The notices prepared by the Tamil Association were distributed and posted in shops and restaurants. Below that, the threatening leaflets passed. Many people read these. Most of them were sympathetic towards the Tamils, openly expressing them. It seemed as though Devaguru's idea had successful.

CHAPTER 4

DEVAGURU had heard that various groups began to form to restore the Eelam Tamils' rights and the final liberation. He also knew these groups were working for the Tamil race's dignity. The fighters of those groups were affectionately called 'the boys' by the Jaffna people. He got in touch with the Karainagar Hindu College senior students who had earlier joined one of the groups and entered it himself.

He had to stay secretively for a few months without training in a town called Kondavil in the Jaffna peninsula. Although the people of Kondavil were very kind and supportive, this period was not productive. He longed to receive proper military training, be on the battlefront and perform rare feats of bravery. It explained some practical difficulties in being sent to the Indian shores. He ground his teeth, trying to be patient. When his patience was beginning to evaporate and the longing was becoming an insistence, he had the opportunity to go over to India and join a training camp.

The group he had joined had a large base in the Thanjavur district in Tamil Nadu. That base conducted many training camps.
Devaguru went to one of those camps, and he was pleased. He resolved to do well and learn from their training, will be at the forefront in the battles against the destruction of the Sinhala army. He is prepared to sacrifice his body for Tamil's land and life. He had conditioned himself to accept that a brave death was a natural part of a soldier's life.

The training was rigorous. Instead of guns, sticks of wood, they used to train. They explained that these exercises would be helpful when the guns arrived. He believed that the training courses would change him into a full-fledged soldier. The moral code and discipline were stringent. But his belief that these were essential for a fighting force slowly started to disintegrate. One day, about three am drowsy from sleep, everyone must go to the grounds with a whistle blast every trainee filed in rows after rows in the center of the court surrounded by the Patronus. The counting began. After many recounts, it was continued and found proof that the two are missing. A select few went to search for the missing.

That day, for about seven hours, the training was suspended. Then all got ordered to file in it. There, both the missing boys were standing with their heads hanging down. They had voluntarily joined the group. There had to be a reason why they had stealthily run away. Should they not have an inquiry and find that out? Devaguru learned that there was no room for democratic rights in military training. But even so, should there be punishment without a trial?

The officer in charge of the camp barked like a rabid dog. All the trainees stood like statues. Those two got orders to run around the parade ground. They were beaten hard with a baton while running. Each blow they received caused a painful echo in Devaguru's heart. With a signal from the officer, they were beaten with force with the gun's handle by another associate.
One of them cried out 'Amma' in unbearable agony and fell to the ground. The trainees went to their camps. 'What is the difference between the Navy man beaten me? And these fellows hitting violently with the gun handle? People may be different, but the ferocity and cruelty are the same' felt Devaguru. Both assaulted trainees were in the medical camp. Each time Devaguru passed that way, his heart was in agony.

Some rebel groups gaining victory battles against the Sinhala army by minor attack trickled through the media. 'As soon as we get the weapons, we will achieve more than them and terrorize the enemies' was the excuse given. There was a story going around that the weapons had arrived, but the Indian officers had taken them and given Indian old weapons instead. How far there was truth in this was not known to Devaguru to this day.

'Some groups to gain unwanted publicity have put their cadres in the battlefront. These insignificant offensives are not going to achieve anything. Our organization is mighty. We have all the facilities. We will change this struggle against the Sinhala government, a people struggle. Once the plans for these get substantial support in Sri Lanka, it will be a full-scale army expedition. We are waiting for that,' they got information from them with enthusiasm. There was a great deal of ambition in all these explanations, but Devaguru was doubtful about there was a massive desire to spread ideological bases. But the priest was perplexed as to how far this was possible.

He had heard about the Indian intelligence organization RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) discouraged him. The different training groups, whose sole idea was to reclaim their land, were cunningly set up against each other, creating divisions and factions. The Tamil politicians who had sought asylum in India said that India divided Pakistan into two parts.

Bangladesh was born as a new country; madam Indira Gandhi will help establish a free Eelam in Sri Lanka. But the RAW acted opposite to this expectation. The Tamil people's aspirations are never taken into account at all. They were using the different combat and groups as dice to get the Sri Lankan Government to bow down, which was how Devaguru understood the situation. Those groups that were subservient to RAW got preferential treatment always. As for the others, their strength was diminished and schemed by the RAW to get them under their control. Their stooge's advancement got charted.

Devaguru grieved that the enmity between the organizations created would shake the liberation struggle's strength. As in Delhi, policies have been made based on the information given to them by the RAW; the latter were able to control the vitality of the combatant groups. Some observed that RAW covertly shook hands with the Sinhala Governments (As the Sinhala claimed that they are the North Indians belonged to the same Aryan race). He was not sure how far this was true.

Some Tamil Nadu Politicians, thinking of their political gains, also showed partisanship and created animosity. More than all this, the factional fights and the leadership battles in his organization made him sad. The divided groups now possessed weapons. They were preparing to have a gunfight with each other in front of the main office. Some of the local leaders intervened in time and prevented a blood bath. There were also rumors flying around that the leaders were using the organization's money in an underhand way. A part of the donations would have deposited in the Swiss banks. When some leaders raised questions about the funds to strengthen their credibility, they were accused as political trouble makers and murdered. A miserable situation arose where Military training, liberation struggle, heroic death all seemed like a mirage. Devaguru reached the end of his patience.

Little by little, the enlightenment that to sacrifice his life unnecessarily for the worthless leaders' animosities and ambitions was great foolishness grew in Devaguru's heart. While he was in despair about what was happening around him, a letter arrived from his older brother. They asked Devaguru to go to a particular place in Chennai. He would receive some money, and further particulars there was the letter's gist. His group has broken up into two factors and two leaders. It was not difficult for Devaguru to leave for Chennai in such an unsettled situation.

Little did he know that the stay in Chennai was going to change him completely. He did not want to betray for any reason the group he had so far been a part of them. He decided not to join the rival group, even though they were highly motivated and disciplined. He arrived in Chennai with these resolutions. He left his romantic dreams of sacrificing his life for the Tamil liberation in the Thanjavur soil and left for Chennai.

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Following Saturday,

Kjell, Alfred, Jon, and Harald assembled in the blue house. Many empty beer bottles were lying in heaps in different directions. They were fully drunk and very annoyed about the notices distributed by the Tamils. They were boiling mad that the Tamil pigs had covered to turn it to their advantage. The Tamils were cunningly courting the peace lovers of Norway to their side. They had got together to discuss how they could beat this strategy. They felt that liquor would help them in making a decision.

'Did you see what the pigs have done?' Kjell yelled with fury. 'We wrote. But Tamils don't seem frightened.'

'Oh yes. Tamils think they are knowledgeable. They are trying to give us advice.'
'Just writing won't work with those people.'
'I told you. You have to thrash Tamils. Just short of killing. They will understand only that kind of language.' Jon shouted angrily.
'What are you saying, Jon?' Kjell asked.
'We will have to thump them. Tamils should be frightened to death.'
'How to do it and to whom? There is a lot of danger in this. There will be room for the Police to stick their noses in.' hesitated Alfred.
'Harald is going to buy a car. The four of us can drive around and beat up the pigs walking alone.'
'If we caught by some, our objectives will fall.'
'Don't be afraid, Alfred. We are not fooling. We will see to it that problems don't arise.'

They opened a few more bottles and continued drinking.

By the time Harald bought his car, winter had begun. Winter in Vardø, which lies north of Norway, is very severe and brutal. There will be sunshine only for a few hours. The rest of the time would be very dark. One can surmise the time only with the aid of clocks. In the beginning, the Tamils found it very difficult to accustom themselves to this environment; also, during winter, icy cold winds would sweep through with storms' strength. It would be agonizing, like death reaching out with frozen fingers and throttling one's neck. Devaguru thought it was an achievement to be commended for the Jaffna people, who had grown among the Palmyra tree and sunshine to have adapted themselves to the terrifyingly chilly conditions.

Today Devaguru worked the night shift. He had to wrestle with the strong wind when leaving for work.

It seemed as if he had finished his work earlier than usual. It was his nature to concentrate intensely on whatever he undertook. There was no one to give him a lift in a car, and he never waited for such an offer either. Wearing the warm cap covering his ears against the cold, he found the road empty of people when he came out of the office. The chill and darkness were keeping everyone indoors. One or two cars were there at a distance.

'It would have been warm inside a car,' he thought at first, then he reproved his heart for yearning for luxuries. Devaguru thought about Nithya. She learned to accept and adjust to living according to the environment and needs in many ways. But still, in some other ways, she was not willing to give up Jaffna's traditions. However late he was, she always waited without eating for him. He told her many times that it was a useless tradition. Many modern Tamil women have written and spoken all sorts of things about feminism. But Nithya argued that it was a comforting love and privilege to wait for one's husband.

While he was walking along with pleasant thoughts of Nithya caressing his heart, there was a big shock! Suddenly a car stopped by his side. Before he could be sure who or what, two or three men jumped out of the vehicle, covered their faces. Entirely with woolen balaclavas. Only the eyes were visible, which glowered with hatred. Before he knew it, a fist rammed into his face. He could not stand even that one fierce thrust like a mechanical action that heaped more and more punches on him. His lips murmured, 'Oh God' He believed that no one but the Almighty was there to help him at that instance. With that trust, he fell senseless to the ground. When the attackers found him unconscious, they reversed the car and sped away. Devaguru lay still on the road. The chill started to engulf the warmth of his body slowly.

CHAPTER 5

ANITA awoke with a feeling of someone having roused her from her sleep. She thought she heard someone moaning, and It sounded like someone was hitting somebody. She wondered whether she was dreaming or imagining things. A car had accelerated and gone. She got up from the bed and, pulling the curtains apart, looked out of the window.

The dim light seemed to be someone lying half on the road and half on the sidewalk. Somebody had attacked that man. He appeared unconscious or perhaps dead? She could not bear the thought. She ran downstairs, woke her parents up, and told them what she had seen.

They all came running out to the street. The three of those family members carried him in. He was breathing regularly. It seemed as though he was becoming conscious. They put him on the long sofa in the lounge and raised the window to let in some fresh air. They brought a towel and wiped the blood trickling from his nose. He tried to sit up but could not do so. He fell back prove on the sofa again.

They looked at him with wonder. Anita's father, Lars, had heard about Devaguru. A social worker had mentioned that he was doing community service through non-violence. But even after a brutal attack, calm with restraint surprised Lars.

Anita's mother brought coffee. Devaguru tried to smile. 'I don't want to trouble you.'

'There is no trouble in this. Please drink this coffee,' The family member said affably. To please them, he drank it. He wished to get up and walk. But even though the spirit was willing, the body refused to cooperate. He realized that it would take a while to recover his strength, so he sat again.
'Shall we call the police?' Asked Lars.
'no.'
'Why are you afraid of taking Police action?' Devaguru smiled. 'Your face looks deformed. This incident was a planned attack. I am afraid that attackers will attack people like you brutally without fear. Do you approve of rowdy, uncouth behavior?' Lars asked with concern.
'Then what is the meaning of forgiving this iniquity?' Astri asked.
'They wanted to make me suffer. I should undergo pain. That was the idea behind the attack. Now their wish is fulfilled. This suffering could satisfy them. By taking away that satisfaction, what pleasure will I gain?'

Lars listening to this, could not fully comprehend his idealism's tenets. But he was surprised at his resolution. He became keen to share Devaguru's experience.

'I am unable to say that I fully understand what you mean.'
'I have Jesus Christ's life as my ideal. Did he not preach to show another cheek if he hit on the one? Why? Beating me up, inflicting pain on me was violence. But violence is not the answer to violence, is my belief. Only Love is the language of humanity what I believe.'

Lars felt proud to have this strange man as his guest in his sitting room.

'I don't want to trouble you any further. It is past midnight. I have to go now!' Devaguru tried to stand up. Lars made him sit down again.

'I am a person who has accepted that the language of humanity is Love. I am also a doctor. So, please let me treat you. We will inform your home.' Lars said firmly.

Those who had waylaid and beaten him up in the middle of the night were Norwegian. At this odd hour, unmindful of the people's discomforts at home, it was also a Norwegian who came forward offering treatment with humanitarian concern. Who represented the soul of Norway? Lars's medicine seemed to lessen Devaguru's pain and made him tired.

'Whatever one's color,
Is not the quality the same?
Could one say,
one is less than the other?'

Bharathiar seemed to sing in his ears. Devaguru closed his eyes.

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Devaguru earned a rare friendship with Ramanathan while living in Chennai. He went to the shop his brother had mentioned in Mannadi and met the owner, Gopal. He gave him money and arranged a room in "Annanagar" for him to stay. Devaguru's brother did not want him to return to Sri Lanka. He promised that he would do his best for Devaguru to lead a new life. To recover from his mental trauma, he advised him to study any course to give hope for the future.

As Gopal had commercial connections in Colombo, they mended broken relationships. Devaguru did not feel like joining a college again and obtaining a degree. He felt the college curriculum was merely factories for producing white-collar workers. Also, he could not learn the real meaning of life there; he decided to involve himself in an eternal search. He went on a pilgrimage to many holy places. He stayed like a needy and a refugee in the pilgrim rest houses. He did not know what he was searching for by that.
No master could understand his melancholy and lead him on the right path. He did not want his idle mind to become the devil's workshop.

He went to Tiruvannamalai Ramana Ashram and stayed there. He found that there was unnecessary propaganda amidst the spiritual seekers even there. While he was returning to Annanagar, frustrated that he became acquainted with Ramanathan traveling in the same bus. He also got off at the same stopping. He found that the latter lived in the neighborhood. Ramanathan invited Devaguru to visit him in his room. The meeting that began once a week becomes a daily occurrence. Ramanathan had worked in Ceylon also. He had post-graduate qualifications in English and Philosophy.

He served in the pre-independence civil service, retired when they passed the Sinhala-only law, and returned to India. He was initially from Madurai, a widower. Both his sons were qualified in computer technology and had emigrated to the U.S.A. Although they keep asking him to join them in Amerika and live with them, he would not go. He was adamant that he can only fulfill his spiritual quest only in India. Devaguru reminded him somewhat of his younger son. Because of this, Ramanathan showered a great deal of affection for him. Devaguru experienced great delight in these meetings, which was like the journey of wisdom through a new treasure trove of books. Ramanathan took him on this pilgrimage by introducing Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave. He encouraged him to learn the essential core of the Bhagavad Gita. The Bible and the wisdom of the Buddha. The excellent expositions cleared the many doubts he had while reading of Ramanathan.

He said on one occasion, 'Chelvanayagam was a great leader. He foresaw the disaster and distress in store for the Tamils and warned them. He may have thought of violence only as a last resort. That was why he was keen to have peaceful negotiations. But the Sinhala leaders failed to use their understandings and broadmindedness in solving the minority problems. They did not honor any of the accords made on human trust. They had not given even the paper's value written to these accords. Because he is a fool and therefore deceived, it only showed the Sinhala leaders' betrayal. One day they compelled the Sinhala people to answer these betrayals of trust.'

Ramanathan critically analyzed Chelva 'He sometimes became a prisoner of his followers through their dictates. It was wrong of them to project him as the Gandhi of Eelam. Chelva never perceived non-violence as a political weapon. Satyagraha means steadfast belief in the truth. The spiritual power of an individual must strengthen before using it. To use that as his weapon Gandhiji undertook many spiritual self-purifying measures. We must not forget that Gandhiji was a spiritualist who spoke about politics. Selva is not a spiritualist. There is no need or opportunity for Selva to cultivate it. The proclamation by his followers, not understanding this raising him as Gandhi of Elam, was a betrayal of the estimation of his political leadership.

'I will not call what happened in Ceylon as Satyagraha. It was a 'bandh' (the forcible prevention of all civil activity) conducted in the name of satyagraha in Tamil areas. This way pushed political slogans to the attention of the people. Could the anti 'Sri' campaign be described as a peaceful protest? What did they try to achieve by touring the 'Sri' boards? There was underlying violence in that. The rally in front of the Secretariat was a blockade. Never fostered the spiritual strength of practicing the discipline of accepting pain and punishment.
I think that is why Satyagraha, as a Political expedient, failed in Ceylon. There was another mistake. What was the number of British administrators against the number of Indians? The numbers were relevant too. Martin Luther King tried to apply non-violence to bend the majority race involved in force and violence. But he did not use it against the State violence. Ramanathan analyzed the various problems in the application of Satyagraha.'

'Hitler made use of the State of terrorizing the Jews. The entire civilized world fought against this injustice. Now the Sinhala Government has let loose even more cruel terror against the Tamils. It is worse than cruel that the civilized world is simply sitting back and watching a calculated genocide. History will not forgive them for their aiding and abetting such barbarianism!' He said on another occasion.

'It was the Buddha and his compassionate sermons that were the first to be assassinated by the Sri Lankan Government. The yellow-robed Buddhist priests have been at the forefront of the murders. Their hands are keeping still stained with the blood of the Tamils. I believed in life. Still, I cannot find it in my head.'

I am not trying to justify their struggle. Justice and righteousness are not the same. Had rejected all the principles of justice..., and state terrorism has been let loose on defenseless people, what recourse have the Tamils left with insecure? Why are the people with humanitarian concerns so reluctant to answer this subtle query? That is the saddest part.

'Baghavad Gita says there is such a thing as killing to avoid more killing. Gandhiji has also accepted this. To kill to prevent genocide is not violence, is what my conscience says! When Ramanathan delved deeply into philosophy, Devaguru found it challenging to comprehend it fully.
However, Ramanathan inculcated the different dimensions of Love, non-violence, and humanism in Devaguru's mind. When he left for Norway, he presented the latter with many rare and valuable books. Whenever Devaguru needed elucidation in subjects troubling him, he always received amplified replies.

When he heard of the demise of Ramanathan in Chennai, Devaguru undertook a fast and a vow of silence for a week. He felt that through that experience, he had an insight into Ramanathan.

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Lars was astonished when Devaguru stood up smiling and walked without showing any pain. He insisted on driving Devaguru's home in his car, although the latter wanted to walk. He accompanied him into the house. When Nithya and the children saw him, they burst into tears.

'Nothing happened to me. It is only a sight injury. Look, I can walk!' He smiled and walked like a child.
'Your face is swollen. It's looking like someone severely beat you. Are you crazy?'
'Nithya calmed down. I am not crazy,' protested Devaguru, and when he realized that Lars was still standing, he asked him to have coffee with them. As Lars wanted to develop a friendship with the family, he agreed.
'Someone cannot prevent accidents... if they can prevent it, then that are no accidents. From some accident, humankind has learned to develop knowledge. Doctor, when Newton saw an apple fall, he understood the Law of Gravity. When one walks alone at night, we can split the face as another dimension of gravity. That is all.' laugh Devaguru.
'You are an unusual man.' said Lars.
'I am an ordinary man who would like to live with humanitarian values.' Devaguru said modestly.
'I, too, am an ordinary man. Two ordinary people can be friends!' Said Lars.
Before Devaguru could reply, Nithya brought coffee and served them both.

CHAPTER 6

TO the youth who had attacked Devaguru, it seemed as though they achieved something on their way to their goal.

Likewise, responded to leaflets. To the nocturnal beating, how wise they react? Will they go around searching for us with retribution on their minds? Or, will they run to the Police and complain! Norwegian have beaten us up! But in that case, the sound of ambulance and Police Klascors were missing.

Even after three hours, there was no reaction. Perhaps that beaten-up Pig had expired on the street? They did not want to kill him. Only to scare them with violence into running away from Vardø and ultimately from Norway.

Harald and Kjell came by car to the spot where they had assaulted him to see whether there were any repercussions. Neither the beaten-up man nor an ambulance was there. They were disappointed that nothing was happening as they expected. The Tamils continued with their lives as before. As they are not scared of being mugged, what was the next course of action? They all assembled the following Friday at the blue house to discuss this. As usual, liquor flowed freely. They looked grim. The silence was heavy.

Unable to stand the silence anymore, Kjell spoke, 'shore pigs don't seem to react. First pamphlets, then beating.
They have done nothing about it and are not getting angry. What are we do now? Say something instead of staring at each other!' The bottle in his hand shook, reflecting his bitter resentment.

‘Did you hear about that party conference? They are afraid to say that this country should belong only to the Norwegian. They are blabbing about multi-culturalism. They must be straightforward like us Norway only for the Norwegian should be stressed. Let's chase the black pigs back to their jungles.
‘The pigs in Oslo are daring. It seems they are going round promisingly to pay back in the same coin.’
‘There are terrorists among them. In the paper Dagbladet when I went to the library the other day, I show that their country’s minister for foreign affairs had given an interview. Even he, although a Tamil himself, has called these people terrorists.’
‘Who cares about him? As far as we are concerned, he is also a pig. Let us think of the Oslo business as a last resort.’
‘Yes, the pigs here in Vardø are thoroughly scared. I think they won’t be able to stand it for very long.’
‘In the present situation, why don’t we support that big mouth old man?’
‘No. That man's commitment is not strong. Our symbol is Hitler’s Swastika. Supremacy of the white man. Rule of the Aryans. The Swastika should rule the whole world.’
‘I will put to you another point. There will be tremendous support for the Swastika symbol. What does history teach us? In 1920 there was only two percent support in Germany. In only thirteen years, the support grew to forty-four percent. That is how we should grow.’
‘We don’t have the patriotism Germany had. People here seem to think that they are great intellectuals.’
‘Listen to the statistics. Someone kill seventeen black people from the Third World in Germany, and They burnt three Hundred and eighty of their homes. That was in 1992. Now it would have increased.’
‘What do you think should be done?’
‘So many things, continue with the assaults. Burn their houses!’

'If we keep doing this, the Police won't sit back and watch.'
'For the sake of our convictions and the greatness of Norway, we will go to jail. What is wrong with that? At least we will have the pleasure of having driven away from the Pigs.'

The mention of the words police and jail were quiet for a while. Kjell broke the silence.

'In Oslo, the Police had confiscated computers. But we don't have to be afraid of that, and our names were not there. Nobody can identify us as Neo-Nazis. Vardø is a small place, and open identification can spell trouble. Police will start keeping us under observation. Our activities have to be secret now. Jon, why are you silent?' asked Kjell.
'No, I was listening to your conversation. The Tamils here don't seem to connect with the Antiracist Centre. If there had been, there would have been a lot of shouting from them. It is an advantage that these people are isolated.'
'What Jon says is important. The Tamils here don't mix with the others. Because they have secluded themselves, people here won't bother about them. We must spread stories to spread displeasure against them amongst our people. They are buying cars from social security allowances, born more children to get more money from the government and so on.'
'Yes, fabricate stories to spread hatred.'
'We have to divide the Norwegian and these people. That would be best for our activities and organization. If the Norwegian start sympathizing and supporting them, it will be unnecessary trouble.'
'That is a long-term plan. Now, what are we going to do?' asked Alfred angrily.
'Nothing now; let us lie low for a while. We have to be watchful of the Police.'

'Does it not become a problem only if we act as a group?' Alfred's question did not elicit an answer from anyone. But it was echoing in Jon's heart. He rose to go saying that he was tired.
'Kjell said, 'We will also leave. Think of some plan and come for the next meeting.'

They bade each other farewell and dispersed.

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Jon returned home. He thought deeply of the idea that had sparked in his mind while at the blue house. It was better to undertake certain activities alone rather than as a group, he decided.
He searched his house to find something to implement his plan. He had a gun that he took for hunting. The bullets were also there. He took them both and then decided that it would not do. He had a lighter on the table. He took that. As he could not find any other useful articles in the house, he went down to the basement. There were several things stored there, among them leftover paintings and items.

He found a piece of rubber hose pipe. He took it and went into the garage. His scooter was parked there and pleased that he had found what he wanted. He kissed the scooter. He went back into the house and returned wearing gloves. He wiped a bottle and filled it with petrol through the rubber hose pipe from his scooter. He made a petrol bomb according to his ability. Technically, it may not have been good, but he trusted that it would cause the destruction he desired.
He put it carefully in a shopping bag. The lighter was working too. When he shut the door of his house, it was two-thirty A.M. The street was silent and empty. He had decided on the object of his aim while making the bomb.

A Tamil family was living a little further down from his house. He had observed their home minutely. He knew that the garage door could not be closed. That door was by the side of the street.

He decided that throwing the bomb through the door while walking past would not be difficult. As if he had trained to do such destructive acts, he acted swiftly. As soon as he had done his deed, he returned home. Halfway when he turned to look, he could see smoke and a flame rising in the garage. Pleased that his plan was working well, he went into his house. He fell on the bed. He slept with a complacent and crafty smile on his face.

Hansen and Leila were the Police on duty that night. They were going towards the hotel as it was the disco's end. They then saw the smoke and the fire from the garage enveloping the house. When they reached the house, the fire seemed to have intensified and spreading fast.

They had no idea whether people were sleeping in there or where the bedroom was situated. They kept circling the house and inform others first.

Rajmohan was sleeping with his wife and daughter in that burning house. He felt as though someone was pressing his chest and found it difficult to breathe. He suddenly woke up choking with the smoke fumes. He realized that the house was ablaze. He ran to open the bedroom door. An intense wave of smoke pushed him and entered the room. He roused his wife, Deepa, and daughter. They also woke up shaking with fear.

He could see through the window someone walking around outside. He opened it. He understood the police's urgency and handed over the child first and then helped Deepa out through the window. The Police also helped her jump down. He followed suit and looked at his home. The flames were entirely devouring the garage. Then the Fire engines arrived with sirens blaring. Rajmohan and his family accepted the invitation to stay at a hotel. Although the firefighters worked bravely, they could not completely stop the house's damage.

Several people came to view the burnt house.

'It was GOD's mercy that those who were sleeping inside escaped.' They talk among themselves, and the Police were investigating the cause of the fire. Devaguru also arrived then. The Police officer said, 'This is more than an accident; we will find out soon.' It spread from the garage. I suspect someone threw a petrol bomb. Devaguru said he found that difficult to believe.

'Have the people living here got any enemies?' asked the Police officer.
'Rajmohan? Not, as far as I know, He is the sort of man who minds his own business.' As they were talking, Rajmohan arrived. Devaguru introduced him to what they speak.
'It was just now telling the officer that you had no enemies...'

The officer repeated that may a petrol bomb could cause the fire. He thinks himself 'that those responsible for the letterbox's warning notices could have done this.' He also suspected it could not be a single person but a group working together. He decided that the headache will be over if this gang was found but did not divulge it.

Devaguru wanted to play down these incidents on a low key.

He did not wish to unnecessary panic among the Tamils living there. He believed that getting agitated would prevent acting sensibly. But Rajmohan was a somewhat talkative person. He revealed to everyone that the police had told him they suspected someone. This matter spread like wildfire amongst the Tamils living in Vardø. Devaguru was upset by what he had not wanted and eventuated.

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While Devaguru was teaching Malathi Tamil, he heard the knock on the front door. He opened it and was happy to find Lars on the doorstep with his family. When they were welcomed in and seated, Devaguru asked their preference for refreshments; Lars said, 'I would like some coffee, Thank You.' Knowing that the Norwegian liked black coffee, he went onto the kitchen to make it. Meanwhile, Malathi had given Anita fruit juice and taken her away to play.

'It seems the Police suspect the fire in that house as arson. Is that true?' asked Lars, sipping his coffee.
'That is what the Police think. Like people talking.'
'We can't believe this. We are shocked,' deplored Mr. Lars.
'How could people do this?' He asked again.
'Among four thousand people, four persons can be different.' Devaguru told.
'How could they do this to a family sleeping with a child?' He asked angrily.
'Hatred and fear have settled into some people's minds. How to remove that is the problem. How are we to resolve this? What should Tamils do? What is the duty of the good-hearted Norwegian? Instead of hating them for their acts of violence, we have to expurgate their apprehensions.'
'You are an extraordinary man.' smiled Mr. Lars.
'Hating one another is foolish. Love towards one another, humanism is great. When that grows, violence will disappear.'

‘I have come with a plan. All of us, Tamils, and the Norwegian will organize a peace march. My wife and I will work hard to get a great number of Norwegian, perhaps when this unity has demonstrates. There is a chance for these harsh elements to be minimized.’ said Lars.
‘Good idea. I thank you very much for your care and regards on behalf of the Tamils.’
‘This is our duty. Please talk to your people and select a suitable date and inform me.’
‘Next Saturday, our Tamil association meeting will be held. We will decide on the date and then let you know.’ replied Devaguru.

Mr. Lars called Anita, who was playing with Malathi inside.

CHAPTER 7

THE Tamil Association meeting began at five o'clock. Devaguru went and sat at the back. Satkunam, when he saw this, asked him to come over and sit at the front. Devaguru was deeply distressed by this critical situation. He was afraid that the young men might think he was trying to gain popularity through this.

The president made a short speech and requested Devaguru to make the keynote address. 'It is necessary to firmly and truthfully tell them about what I think,' thought Devaguru. 'Do your duty regardless of the result. Whatever the results, offer it to God's grace.' He remembered Ramanathan talking to him about Gita's essence, Devaguru spoke.'
'We are all grieved about the arson attack Rajmohan's house. We must not forget that many Norwegian share this pain. They would like to protest against this violence and hold a silent procession. We, too, would like to join them.
I think this peaceful protest is an excellent beginning to condemn the violence of a few Norwegian.'
'The different aspects of violence are beginning to manifest. We are going to oppose this by non-violence and is important. It is not a pre-tense. The Norwegian must realize that we are truly committed to the way of love. How are we able to be united as a family? It is because the language of the family is love and bonding. This language will extend to the community, and that is all. Love is our religion. Reconciliation is our new scripture. Non-violence is our weapon. Humanism is our heart's song. Does everyone agree?'
'Yes… Yes...' many assented from different parts of the hall.

'Will this work? It is all very well to talk about love and non-violence.' He is continuously knocking us down. Are we to keep meekly bowing down? Who preached about compassion more than the Buddha? Those who claim to follow him, the Buddhist Sinhalese, are the people committing atrocities against us. Otherwise, would we have come to a place unknown to this cold night and day and dreadfully degenerated?' Said Vignes angrily.
'I would like to ask a small question. Who used Satyagraha as a weapon? Mahatma Gandhi. Are they following the Gandhian way in India now? You can see his photographs in currency notes and the courts. That is all. Those who assassinated him have now come to power. Gandhism is dead. Brother Devaguru is trying to resurrect it.' Arjun spoke in the tone of finding fault.
'Non-violence did not work in our birthplace either. Our boys are getting killed in the jungles of Wanni. Here we talk about non-violence as though we are saints,' said Amuthan.
With the opposition from the three young men, everyone began to feel the meeting's objective was turning in direction. Satkunam anxiously wondered how to come up with a reply to this.

Many thought these questions were a challenge to Devaguru's advocacy of pacifism. He remained calm.

'Brother Devaguru must answer this.' Ragu asked.
Everyone thought that Devaguru has caught in a dilemma. He stood up and surveyed the assembly with equanimity. Then he enunciated every word and started speaking.

‘The questions raised by these young men are quite right. I am not an eloquent person. You must not think I am arguing. There is a saying that God's brilliantness not acceptable in their land of birth. The Prophet Mohammed was stored and chased from his birthplace. Mecca to Medina. There is no Christianity in the land where Jesus was born. It is Judaism that has endured there. The only Hindu country in the world is Nepal. Buddha was born there. There is no place for Buddhism in either the land of his birth or where he became enlightened. But all these religions have flourished in other countries. Gandhi, too was assassinated in his own country. The extremist Hindu Organization to which his assassins belonged now has nuclear bombs in their hand. How all this madness will help India remains has to see. How many women in Jaffna were raped by the peacekeeping force sent by another Gandhi? How many people were killed by them? Although some provoked in some way, they can not switch from peacekeeping. I don’t think this will heal all those mental wounds in one generation. Just because the Sinhalese cannot understand love's language, it does not mean that Gandhian principles have perished. I have not degraded our motherland's liberation struggle even in my dreams. I view the boys fighting there as practicing non-violence according to war principles from Githa. I failed my opportunity to be part of that.’

‘However, according to times and circumstances, our code of ethics should change. That is not an instance of time serving. These changes are essential for the humanitarian renaissance, and that is how I think. The liberation struggle is inspiring. We who have left the battlefront and are here as refugees, leading comfortable lives, have no right to even talk about it. That I have not participated in will always be a scar that will never heal in my heart. That is not the time to open that abscess. Do you know what stories Chandrika and her foreign affairs Minister Kadirgamar are spreading worldwide?

All Tamils are terrorists. Please do not give them refugee status in your countries and impair your country's peace is what they are advising. Should we get involved in violent activities and be called terrorists in these countries where we have sought refuge? We are proving as a peaceful people by committed to non-violence. We shall be Tamils, not degrading the liberation struggle in our motherland. That is very important. Forgetting this, getting emotional, and shouting slogans distresses me.

I apologize for making long explanations. Anyway, these are not the issues facing us right now. Are we prepared to join hands with Norwegian? The Norwegian are stretching a friendly hand to solve our problem on a humanitarian basis. That peace march does organize for our sakes. Are we to participate in that? Yes, or No, that is what we have to decide?'

Devaguru calmly sat down. It is the depth of knowledge that impressed all those present. They listened to him, akin to a frozen state.

'Only a courageous man could use non-violence as a weapon,' he had once said, which was echoing in Satkunam's mind as he watched Devaguru with admiration.
Vignes had planned to create difficulties. Now he could not say anything, so he asked peaceably, 'Who will bring the Norwegian?'
'You may have heard of a doctor called Lars. His wife Astrid is a Nurse!' Replied Devaguru.
'They are influential with the municipal councilors. They have promised to collect a large number of Norwegian.'
'I propose that we Tamils wholeheartedly participate in this peace march.' said Vignes. Ragu seconded it, and the proposal dos carried unanimously, satisfying everyone.

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The peace march was even more successful than expected. This procession beginning at a big church and ended at another church. After the parade, the Parson conducted the service and addressed the congregation. Jesus Christ had forgiven those who had been cruel to him was the theme of his sermon. When the procession dispersed, there was an impression that the whole population had been there. Everyone wholeheartedly praised Lars and Devaguru. The local Radio and NRK interviewed both of them.

The media reviewed it as 'Peace march was an example of the success of revolution of the Humanitarian basis.'

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The Peace march's success infuriated the four scheming Neo-Nazis who usually gathered at the blue house.

'The white pigs have joined the black pigs.' Jon lamented.
'Hey, we never set fire to that house. So why are those black pigs, Making such a song and dance about it?' Yelled Kjell.
'The Police believe that someone had thrown a petrol bomb.' Told Alfred.
'Well, we didn't do it. So, who else could have done it?' Asked Kjell.
'Maybe these Tamil pigs did it themselves now are telling another story?' Asked Alfred.
'There were people inside it, it seems.' Tell Kjell.
'If they don't find out who did it, it will be risky for us.' Tell Alfred.
'He hasn't learned his lesson.' Tell Jon.
'Many of our people are aligned with him. That will jeopardize us...' Tell Alfred.

‘We must not do anything. The Police are vigilant. They are making inquiries about those leaflets. We have to be careful.’ Tell Kjell.

Jon interrupted them, and Alfred accused him of being a coward. Jon smiled to himself, and he was pleased that nobody suspected him. The car driven by Harald was speeding towards the blue house.

CHAPTER 8

LARS had asked Devaguru to meet him on Friday night at nine-thirty at his house. It was past nine twenty, and yet Nithya was not back home. He had already told Nithya about this meeting the previous day. While he was getting agitated whether she had forgotten all about it, she arrived. Devaguru left as she opened the door. Nithya is observing his haste, though. 'Good thing this man did not think of becoming a monk. He should occupy like this.' She smiled to herself.

There were four Norwegian waiting at Lar's house. He introduced them to Devaguru. Two were teachers, and One was a nurse. Mrs. Astrid Lars served coffee, and an informal atmosphere prevailed in that room. Astrid also joined the conversation. Lars came straight to the point.

'They would like to begin an organization based on your principles. I said we would invite you and discuss this. That is why we are here.'
'The principles are not mine. The path of love has already been preached by many. Jesus and Buddha have greatly emphasized this. They thought and lived by their examples of how love could create a wonderful way of life to help humanity progress nobly. In the twentieth century, Gandhiji showed how they could solve political differences successfully through the creed of Ahimsa or non-violence. I am canvassing among the Tamils here about how it will be useful in clearing contentious and bringing about peace.' Thus, Devaguru very courteously explained his base and services.

They explained that it was because they had understood this. The Norwegian had invited Devaguru to speak with him. Norwegian are peace lovers. Even though they are a small country, they are keen to help world peace. They are at the forefront in helping the refugees on a humanitarian basis. Like the resurrection of Hitler, Neo-Nazis organizations cropping up in Europe worries them. The slogan against the Jews in the past now sounds opposing the unfortunate refugees who came to Europe from Third World countries. Civilized people are hanging their heads because of these discordant cries and organizations. There in Vardø, too, there is a fear. Such a Nazi move sets in. It was their opinion that to prevent such precautious by these groups and organizations.
'Excellent thinking. My whole-hearted cooperation for it. I will ask my Tamil acquaintances to support this.' Devaguru said with alacrity.

A name has needed for this association. After considering different names, 'Vardø Ikke Vold forum' was suggested by Devaguru, which unanimously accepts by the others. One of the teachers asked Devaguru to be the President.
'Thank you for your trust. But it is my conviction that I should not be a President of any society or association.'
'Why?'
'Please don't think that too is a Gandhian tent. I prefer to work as a servant at the bottom of the rung. It is easier to take the beliefs to others as a member. The position as a President will be a burden for me. In many ways, from many angles, Dr. Lars is more worthy of being President than I. Besides, he can communicate with the Government officials and easily explain things to them!' Said Devaguru.

Lars said that he has prepared to accept the President's position only because it was his request.

‘Though you, the cooperation and participation of the Tamils should be there in a big way,’ they urged. Devaguru promised to do that to the best of his ability.

'Vardø Ikke Vold Forum' was inaugurated in a school hall on a determined day. In the register of attendance for the meeting, seventy-two Tamils and fifty-five Norwegian had signed. Devaguru made a profound speech at that meeting. His speech's gist was that the language and meaning of love was the most potent instrument in preventing brute force. He was not fluent in Norwegian, so he translated his Tamil speech without spoiling the tone and essence. He was elected a member of the executive committee. On the following Monday, the Association has registered legally. The executive committee arranged a media meet. Reporters from the pres, Radio, and T.V all participated with enthusiasm.

The T.V had a special interview with him. As usual, he spoke about love, non-violence, the Gandhian way, the power of Humanism. The decline of humanity due to hatred and malice. He explained the political background as to why the Tamils have sought refuge in Norway.
The horrifying consequences of oppression in the name of color and race. He spoke with sincerity.

‘We love Norway and its people. We respect their compassion. We will remember their goodwill for generations to come. We will serve for the welfare and progress of this country to the best of our ability.’

All the good-hearted Norwegian appreciated his interview, and he has lauded himself as a great man. His services rose in the estimation of the Tamils too.

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Jon growled with hatred. 'These white pigs are marching behind the black pigs and destroying our country.'

During the Christmas Holidays, a distracted relative called Molten came to stay with Alfred. He was a high school student who was outspoken about his dislike of foreigners. 'In my school, some girls are in love with black pigs. They will spawn black piglets. If only I had a gun, I would shoot the lot of them!'

He shouted. When he was screaming abuse, Kjell was also there at Alfred's home. So Molten was admitted to the next meeting at the blue house.

'Everything is going wrong for us. That fellow who got a beating from us is a big man now. These worthless pigs give him prominence in the T.V. These white pigs are looking up to him as a leader.' Jon yelled.
'Who set fire to that house? Is there another group operating who are more intense than us?'
'Never mind about that. What are we going to do now?' Jon tod.
'We have to plan something.' Alfred told.
'We must not burn houses. The Police are vigilant.' Kjell told.
'So, what else then?' Asked Alfred.
'We can beat up someone?' Told Jon.
'They will go in a procession again.' Told Alfred.
'We can disrupt the procession. I will suggest a plan.' Told Molten.
'We will talk about Molten's adventures later.' Told Jon.
'Whom do we beat up?' Asked Alfred.
'We will look around. When we get a fair chance, we will make use of it.' Told Jon.
'We must thump that leader. What is his name?' Kjell Told.
'Devaguru or some such thing.' Jon tell.
'This time, we must break his bones.' Told Kjell.

'When shall we do it?' Asked Molten.
'His luck will decide that.' Jon told.

They had decided that they would take turns for one person to be sober so that he could drive the car. Today it was Jon's turn. They drove around looking for Devaguru to no avail. But they did not want to go away empty-handed, so they decided any black man would do.

Ultimately, they drove down to the garbage dumping area. As the place was outside the town, hardly anybody came that way. Only if excessive rubbish had accumulated, people came over to dump it. The radio was on, playing challenging rock music inside the car, and the headlights were on. It was pitch dark outside.

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There was an old mattress in the basement. Its appearance and stink was-sickening. Since it was a hard mattress, it could not stuff it in the usual black garbage bag.
So, Vinayakam Pillai decided to take it to the rubbish dump. He thrust it into the car dickey and drove. On his way, as Vinayakam Pillai neared the rubbish dump, and noticed a stationary car with headlights on it. Cursing the bright, almost blinding light, he threw away the rubbish and returned.

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Jon noticed the man driving the car, and he would not ascertain the person's identity in the darkness. It looked like a Tamil by the physical appearance. He decided to tell his cohorts to rouse them that the man was Devaguru. 'Hey, Devaguru! There that pig is going.' he bellowed. Everyone became excited. Jon immediately drove the car to the middle of that road. He stayed inside the vehicle with the headlights on it.

When Vinayakam's car approach, Jon put all the lights on that are used in emergencies. Vinayakam could not understand what was happening. He thought that there was something wrong, which is why they had the lights on. When he came closer, he saw two men bending over the car's open bonnet. Their heads were not visible.

He stopped the car and walked towards them. It was stationary before. How did it move to the center of the road? Before he could fully realize the significance of this, the two who had been bending pretending to repair suddenly straightened. Vinayakam was stunned. He wondered why they were wearing masks. The next second with a roar, 'filthy black pig,' an iron fist landed on his nose like an explosion. Vinayakam nearly fainted. It seemed as though the two persons had increased into five. They thrashed him, punching him over and over again. He screamed, 'Oh, Amma.' He became entirely unconscious.

Having done, what they set out to do, they drove away. When Vinayakam Pillai slowly regained consciousness, he felt extreme pain in his legs. Before he froze to death, he thought he should get to his car. Vinayakam Pillai slowly dragged himself painfully inch by inch towards it. By the time he reached the car with excruciating pain, he almost fainted again.

The Police came to the hospital, visited Vinayakam, and made inquiries, and that was an additional headache and worried for them. The next day the news spread like wildfire all over the Town. The young men were furious, and the older people felt that those events are inevitably gone. Women were alarmed. The Tamils of Vardø felt that their peace has robbed. What would the repercussions be? Mortal fear was creeping into everyone's mind.

CHAPTER 9

DEVAGURU had bought a car mainly so that Nithya could go to and from the factory without fear. She used the vehicle only to drive to work. At other times Devaguru used it. After having bought everything according to the shopping list his wife had given him, Devaguru started the car. There were still a few people about on the street. When he turned by the Church's side, he thought he saw SellaKannan's daughter. Vikina was sobbing and walking. SellaKannan came from the same town back home and was a distant relative. Devaguru never liked to see children cry. He wanted them to be like carefree fresh blossoms dancing and playing with joy. So, he tried to console her.
He slowed down the car. When he sounded the horn, she turned around. He beckoned her to come over. She hesitated.

'Come, child. Get in. I will drop you off at your place.' His kind invitation was attractive to the child, so she climbed in. Her sobbing continued.
'What happened, dear? Did anybody hurt you?'
'Mmmm…'
'Come On! You are a clever girl you must tell uncle what is worrying you. Please answer me without crying.'

It took a lot of persuasion and cajoling to make her smile. After completing her laugh for a while, he wanted to determine the reasons for her misery.

'Vikina?'
'Yes. Uncle.'
'Will you please tell me what happened at school?'
'Mmm ….'

'Don't cry. Tell me what happened?'
'Uncle, we were playing by ourselves. Then two Norwegian kids came and disturbed us. So, we went over to another spot and played there. There too, they came and would not let us play. Then we pushed them. So, they held their noses and said, we stank of garlic and ridiculed us. We put up with that and went on playing. Then they spat on us and ran away. Why should they spit on us? Are we garbage bins?'
'No, we are human beings.'
'That's it, uncle, why are they doing this?'
'That is what I am wondering.'
'Is someone spreading spiteful stories about us?'

How could one answer this little girl? What could that society gain by wounding the children's innocent young minds?

'Isn't that wrong, uncle? In Ceylon, we never mixed with low caste people, mother said. Is that true?'
'In Jaffna, people without any compunction lashed their tongues at certain groups as despicable castes.
Here their heirs are spat sometimes. Is this retribution by the moral codes of action and reaction or God's justice?'
Devaguru's heart ached.
'Who planted the seeds of color and race hatred in the hearts of the Norwegian children?'

They arrived at Vikina's house. He was thankful that he did not have to give a heartful reply to that tender mind. She held his hands and insisted that he visit her home. Unable to reject the child's invitation, he complied. SellaKannan opened the front door and welcomed Devaguru in.

Devaguru liked to spend his leisure time in useful occupations. He was a voracious reader when there were so many things as vast as the ocean to learn; he did not care to waste his time gossiping. Boasting about the new car, house, washing machines, household items, and other recent acquisitions was annoying. He considered that those who gave the prime position to money-making and ignored all the other human duties were human worms. Working towards the salvation and upliftment of humanity was divine service.

Kannan noticed that his daughter's face has puffed up by crying.

'Vikina, did you cry at school?' Asked him.
'M....'
She answered in the affirmative.
'Why?'
'Spat on us.'
'Who?'
'Two Norwegian girls.'
'Did you tell the teacher?'
'No!'
'Why didn't you tell the teacher?'
'M....'
When there was no reply from Vikina, he turned to Devaguru and said with a sort of despair, 'What am I to do? Shall I go and speak to her class teacher?'
Devaguru calmly replied, 'This is not only for Vikina. This problem is a humiliation and problem for all the children. We have to think this through and act.'

*

The school Headmaster was an elderly gentleman, and his spectacles were hanging on the tip of his nose. He welcomed them with a smile. There were many files and letters and a computer on his desk, and the computer has switched on. The Headmaster seated on his revolving chair stood up and shook hands.
'Good day. What can I do for you?' He asked. Devaguru and Kannan introduced themselves.
'There is a great deal to be done.' Devaguru smiled.
'If it is possible, it will be done.'
'His daughter Vikina is a pupil here.' Told Devaguru.
'Mmmm'
'They have harassed and threatened and spat on her.'
'Are the children from the same class?'
'Children from this school.'
'I am sorry to hear that. I will make inquiries.'
'We did not come for that reason...'
'Tell me!'
'It seems that this is something of a problem endured by mostly non-white children.'
'Could be. We will try to rectify that.' Say, headmaster.
'What is happening is not following the compassionate nature of this country's people. They will create a blemish on the good name of the country. Children are not born with hatred towards people of different colors and creeds, and they learn this in their growing environment. We must talk with the parents. First, their attitude should change.'
'What you say is correct. We will organize a Parent-Teacher meeting. But such arrangements are not much attended by Tamil Parents. I am sorry to say this, but most Tamil Parents seem to think that their obligations are over merely sending their children to school.
'I will talk to the Tamil Parents and ask them to come to the next meeting.'
'Thank You.'
'I think this is a duty of all the parents.'

'If this sense of duty prevails with all parents, most of the problems that school administration has will be solved easily.'

The Headmaster rose and said that he would inform the meeting date through the children and bade them farewell.

*

Devaguru returned home feeling depressed. 'There was truth in what the Headmaster had said. It did not seem as though the Tamil Parents were taking enough interest in their children's upbringing or educational progress. Kannan and his wife worked long hours. Life seemed to mean just earning money. All this accumulation of wealth was for whose benefit? Is that all there is to life? They will realize only too late that they had not raised their children properly. Then, Why not talk to them? They will say a simpleton who cannot get rich is ranting due to jealousy that he was unnecessarily interfering. Should one keep quite afraid of such snubs and not do one's duty to the community?'
'If one wishes to come face to face with the truth that explains all matters, one should love even the most despicable enemy as oneself. Inclined people thus must not ignore any part of life.' Gandhi's advice came floating in his heart.

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Malathi diverted his contemplations.

'Father, I have finished my Tamil homework.'
'My Malathi is a clever girl. Bring it along for correction.' He was very pleased with Malathi's progress in her Tamil lessons. He never forgot to teach her Tamil, even if he failed to eat. The time spent teaching her was also pleasurable as that was when he could play with her.
'Today, you were saying that you will sing a Bharati song to me.'

‘Yes, I do not forget that.’
He went to fetch Bharati's song. Bharati's songs are his chief weakness. He is proud of it.

CHAPTER 10

THE police concluded that the fire's cause at the house was arson. They suspected that the nocturnal assaults also were the handiwork of some underground racist group. To assist them in their inquiries, two officers Vegard and Asbjørn from Oslo, arrived. The information gathered so far was not sufficient. They did not know where to begin. They drove around the streets of Vardø in a white car specially allocated to them in the hope of finding some clue. In the Police circles, Vegard has esteemed as a clever man. They parked the car by the verge of the street and sat inside listening to the radio news. Then a vehicle parsed at high speed with music blaring. Asbjørn felt that they have to stop as the car exceeded the city's speed limit. He started the car.

'Asbjørn, wait.'
'Why?'
'These fellow's music and behavior seem different. We must observe them without making them suspicious, Right. Now start the car,' said Vegard.
'To tail them?'
'To find out where they lived.'
'Asbjørn swore and started the car. That car that had driven at high speed had halted. Those who had been in it were going into a blue house. Vegard wrote down the house number and asked Asbjørn to drive without pausing.
'What next?' asked Asbjørn.
'We must eavesdrop on their conversation. My extinct tells me that should watch these fellows.'
'By telephone?'
'They won't be talking over the phone. we must get inside the house.'
'Room spy, interception?'

'We will think about it.'

*

It took two days for them to get permission from their Chief. They took enough food and drink and drove towards the blue house that evening in a white car. They went three home to the blue house and parked the car.

We may have to wait around till morning. Switch off the engine, said Vegard. Hours went by. They zipped themselves into their sleeping bags and waited. After midnight, the door of the blue house opened, and three men emerged. One man went back inside the house after seeing the other two out. Vegard guessed that he was probably the occupant of the house. Asbjørn was sleeping and yawning.

'We will take turns to keep them under observation. You sleep!'

Said Vegard. He kept watch till four A.M, and when his eyes were feeling teary, he woke up Asbjørn and slept. When he woke at seven o'clock, he was shocked and annoyed to see Asbjørn also fast asleep.

'Hey Asbjørn!' he shook him awake 'I asked you to keep watch?'
'I was awake till six o'clock, and then I couldn't help it…. I am sorry.'

They both avoided looking at each other and were silent. Vegard poured some coffee from the flask and started drinking. Asbjørn, feeling guilty, also drank some coffee.

'What shall we do now?'
'We will wait till one o'clock.'

They waited. That lengthy inactivity was annoying to both of the men. It was ten o'clock, and the sun was shining bright. It was warm inside the car. They wore their dark glasses to avoid the glare.
Ten past ten. Kjell suddenly emerged from the house. He got into his car and drove away without noticing them. After observing his departure, Vegard got the vehicle moved to the junction. He asked Asbjørn to alert him in the walkie-talkie if he returned and walked towards the blue house. The door clicked opened after the fifth key. He quickly went inside and inspected every room. Computer, writer telephone, fax all the conveniences were there. Most people nowadays had this equipment. While he was making a tour of the house, he saw two copies of the notorious pamphlets against the Tamils in one of the rooms. However, only two copies are not extraordinary evidence; this house connects with the activities against the Tamils. He concluded.

In the bathroom, on the rack above the washing machine. There was five baseball bat. There was a dirty linen basket in a corner. In these were mask-like balaclavas.
As Vegard did not want to stay too long, he fixed two microphones under the lounge's sofas. Then he set one in the vase in the bedroom. After ascertaining that his presence had not changed anything, he walked out, pulling the door shut after him. As he stepped out onto the street, unexpectedly, he saw Kjells car coming from the opposite direction. Although he has taken back momentarily recovering, he swiftly hid in a corner. After Kjell went in, he slipped away to where their car has parked.

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It was Friday Kjell at home. Jon arrived around eight o'clock. Kjell had expected the others too and was disappointed with their absence.

'Jon. Where are the others?'
'They have gone to the mountains on tour.'
'If they do this, how are we to intensify our course of action?' Asked Kjell.
'Maybe they are afraid of the Police!' Asked Jon.
'If we don't do anything, those Pigs will lose their fear.' Told Kjell.
'Also, these Tamils are going to have a meeting, it seems.'
'Whatever we do, it doesn't seem to have any effect on those Pigs.' Told Kjell.
'We have to do something severe to make them squirm.'
'What can we do? No one knows who set fire to that house. But they suspect our group?' Told Kjell
'M..mm' Jon smiled.
'Why are you smiling?' Asked Kjell.
'Nothing.'
'You are evasive.' Said Kjell, not entirely convinced.
'Why don't we beat up two or three more?'
'Next time, they should beat them to death. Should break their limbs.' Sayed Kjell.
'I am ready. If we look around, someone will get caught.' Told Jon.

Vegard did not want any more unfortunate incidents to take place. He did not doubt that this group was responsible for the previous violent acts. There was not sufficient evidence against them for the arson, and Jon probably knows something that he was not divulging. Vegard returned to the Police station and got the order to arrest them.

While searching for them, their car has seen turning a corner. Vegard immediately switched on the blue flashing lights and the Klaxon and pursued them. Their quarry did not stop the vehicle. Kjell realized he could not go any further when they got part of the rubbish dumping area. He brought the car to a stop by the side of the road. Vegard and Asbjørn got out and walked over to their vehicle, and Vegard knocked on the closed windows on the driver's side. Kjell wound down the window.

'We are Police. I would like to see your driving license and the car registration.'
Kjell showed them, and everything seemed in order. Vegard noticed the baseball bat and full mask on the back seat. 'Will you both get down from the car pleased?' They slowly descended.
'Spread your feet and put both your hands on the top of your heads.'

They did it without protest. Vegard checked to see whether they had any weapons hidden in their personas.

'We are arresting you,' Vegard said and put the handcuffs on them.
'Why are you arresting us?' Jon burst out.
'For unlawful acts of violence against the Tamils.'
'Have you any proof?'
'Shut up! Do you think we are fools to come without that?'

Monday morning, around eleven o'clock, two Police vehicles stopped in front of the blue house. Two Policemen accompanied Vegard and Asbjørn, and they found the remaining clues and baseball bat. There was a pistol gun in the toilet water tank. The source used for the leaflet has found when they saw the computer. Also found an encrypted document. They were all taken away in the police vehicles. The house sealed.

The news broadcasted. The local radio and the newspaper published the news, and Harald and Alfred heard the news through the radio. At first, they were afraid that Jon and Kjell might reveal everything. They debated whether they should get back to the city or not. Then overcoming their fear, they returned.

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SellaKannan came to Devaguru's house and lamented that Deepa insisted she was going back to Colombo with Vikina.

The Parent-Teacher Association meeting went off well. Many Tamil Parents had come to the meeting due to the persuasion of Devaguru. Many Norwegian spoke of the necessity of Norwegian children changing hearts through the environment at home. Two Norwegian Parents asked openly to forgive the affected children's parents, which were moving. Two weeks later, old incidents came to mind again and again. Spitting and name-calling started again, and Vikina had been humiliated. Devaguru understood that this was why Deepa was bitterly resentful.

Many people had no idea of the intense interest Devaguru showed regarding the liberation struggle, and now minutely, he knew about the events taking place. He never publicly aired his views. He understood the war as blood spilled today for yesterday's blunders. He always had an exalted opinion of the supreme sacrifice of the fighters who donated their young lives. At the same time, he felt sad for the Sinhala village youth who were losing their lives unjustly for the sake of arrogant and authoritarian rulers' selfishness. Motherland was sacred. Its freedom was holy Tamil fighters are involved in the war to restore their rights, as they had no other option. Even what their leaders thinking about that. But what is the ideology of the Sinhala youth who are sacrificing their lives in the war? Was it because of the poverty at home? Many of them had no idea why they were fighting. The Sinhalese land grabbing politics justified by the Politicians, intellectually sensation mongering journalists, and the Buddhist bhikkhus should be dragged to the war trout by the Sinhala youth. Those who this was that taking by force.

But this was horrendous. Are these contemplations against the precepts of non-violence are Devaguru had accepted. When he had deeply meditated upon this, Mahatma Gandhi's words had echoed in his mind. 'I cannot accept the principles of not killing animals. I feel it is wrong to allow vicious animals to increase. Killing such animals is not only pardonable but a duty as well.' Next to the inherent characteristics of animals. They are not rational. They cannot understand the concept of benevolence, yet they do not kill their kind. But to hold on to their lofty position, power and riches, their style is sacrificed by the Politicians. Are they not vicious animals, a scourge?

Truth and love should help to win the welfare of the future. How wicked is it to live for today's profits, pomposity and comforts and forget about tomorrow's interest? The children of today are the wealth of tomorrow.

The future is theirs! To ignore their moral upbringing duties is like a curse for the community. Devaguru felt it was his duty to make the parents in Vardø conscientious about this, particularly among the Tamil parents. The incident concerning Vikina had intensified his realization. He felt that Deepa's fury was an example of this problem's core. After thinking it through, he arranged to meet the Tamil parents one Sunday. The Tamil Association President Satkunam, young Ragu, SellaKannan, all worked hard to bring all the parents together. So, most of the parents who cared about their children's education progress were also present.

Devaguru opened the meeting. 'This is not a public meeting. There will be no speeches or sermons. All of us who are parents care and worry about our children's educational advancement. The parents must make decisions for the children who cannot make choices concerning their future correctly. Some have individually resolved their course and are implementing it. We need a healthy exchange of thoughts and ideas to know our options. This get-together will make that possible, and we can learn a great deal from other's experiences. I can disclose such experiences frankly. We could all then benefit by it.'

Put that opinions little by little forward. Many incidents came to light as a result of the discussion.
Many parents felt guilty that they had not adequately planned their children's primary education, as they had engrossed in making moves. Many parents are now interested in planning and streamlining their future.

Some parents, especially those in Oslo, educate their children in England. Those people have close relatives living there. Having such convenient connections was a prime reason for that decision.

‘Through an English education, the children could have job opportunities in countries like America, Canada, and Australia. Also, if there were to be place conditions in Sri Lanka, they may return there and get good jobs. The wealthy Sinhalese Politicians educate their children in England, and our children will be equally suitable! These thoughts prompt the parents towards English education. They were unwilling to relinquish the old English colonial days' ideas. They conveniently forgot that the Sinhalese children are in a different category because their mother tongue is Sinhala.

They did not realize that England's educational system had not vastly changed to suit the world's employment requirements. The countries have designs to alter their migration laws suddenly. They tightened against the Asians and the other people from the third world. There was no forethought of either of the many more changes that could happen. Tamil people living in the past and planning has done for the future. It could see that in such arrangements, care of the children’s Tamil people abandoned their cultural identities. There were also doubts about whether there will be sufficient compensation for the capital invested.

Many sent their children to India, Tamil Nadu, for their education. Kunjan family who lived in Vardø were among those many who persevered in such a course. This course's basis was that they wanted their children to grow up and sturdy in the Tamil environment to preserve the cultural identity and that there were many practical complications in such plans that came to light. India takes first place in treating the refugees most despicably and without any humanitarian considerations. The Tamil refugees refuse even the Tibetans and Bangladeshis refugees' facilities. Also, Tamil Nadu's education's desire helps to cover the inner motive. In Tamil Nadu, the truth could have the medium of instruction in English is not explicitly mentioned.

Once, the ‘sympathy for the Eelam Tamils’ policy was a popular way of getting votes. Each party tried to be at the forefront of supporting a particular liberation group. Those days were over. M.G.R was a leader who took a firm stand in supporting the Eelam Tamils liberation struggle. A messy situation arose where another leadership that once had actively engaged in protecting the Tamil honor now plays it in a low-key. There is a rumor that the 'Tigers fear' retains their post.

The brahmin-controlled media and RAW activities are intense in their machinations in propagating an anti-Eelam. They make anti-Tamil feelings among the public minds. Even though many years have passed, Tamil Nadu seems to think it could obtain a political advantage by capitalizing on the assassination's tragedy. As a result of assassinations, the Politicians and the Police, some other administrative cadres seem to think of the Eelam Tamils as a good source of bribes. The sums of money the Eelam Tamil students had to fork out as bribes were immense. The academic degrees that are ultimately theirs amidst such expenses and mental wounds were not going to be the passport for a livable future. Kunjan had to return to Norway due to Visa problems. More than all this in middle age, the healthy family life and comforts have been wholly abandoned. It is challenging to estimate these sacrifices in Rupees and cents.

When one considered the difficulties in England, Tamil Nadu, it seemed better to return to Colombo and educate the children there. ‘The Sinhala Army now is not like the way it used to be. The sort of madness that prevailed before that if four soldiers died, forty Tamil civilians killed by them’ is no longer there. So many Tamils are, after all, living in Colombo and educating their children.

Thus, many parents console themselves, willing to forget all the sufferings they had experienced before as a bad dream.

The Tamils are condemned as economic refugees and not political refugees by such acts. They don't even think that the Eelam Tamils are insulted because of this. Whatever we refused to accept when we ran away to foreign, we impose our children the same set of circumstances and miseries conveniently forgotten. They have the sensory perception that the Eelam Tamils are viewed as second-class citizens and international lepers by such spineless conduct.

Under the rule of Tamil leaders who spoke the cinematic verse 'Tamil Nadu that made Vandar live,' even those who buy and store drugs are being kicked and persecuted as 'LTTE supporters' and ' involves conspiracy action.' When they see this, some parents are forced into the mentality that it is not disgusting to surrender to the Sinhalese as a second-class citizen.

Many Eelam Tamils with Norwegian passports had still not conditioned themselves as Norwegian. Though legally they were Norwegians, they lived as Tamils in their hearts. There was nothing wrong with that. But they are afraid to perceive Norway's citizenship in the proper dimension. Most of them did not have the loyalty and fascination for their adopted country. Could they not free themselves of the illusion of having a license for a temporary residence? They were eager to return, should an independent Tamil Eelam was to be established, and would not have minded living a simple life, as long as they could unite to their land with which they had an affinity. Even though their hearts were longing for that, they seemed to have forgotten that children should nurture and value native Tamil traditions and identity?

The parents ultimately accepted that the surmise was the unfortunate truth of the matter. A few forgotten themselves in their newfound luxuries relished saying that they will never return to that beggar country. (The pet name these vulgar Tamils have given their mother country!) At the end of the group discussion, Devaguru thanked the parents and continued, 'We live in the hope that in the future-next century or perhaps the century after that, the Eelam Tamils will have an area of land, a country to live in with dignity. The distinction of having proclaimed their racist identity through their language alone belongs to us. Tamil is not only an ancient language but an international one as well. Those fighting for the liberation, glory, and governance of it and bear the cross for it are Eelam Tamils. But promoting the Tamil identity among the next generation is paramount in the learning process should not be forgotten or abandoned. So, in every Eelam Tamil's home, whether he lives in the northern hemisphere or the southern hemisphere or the Sahara Desert, Tamil should be the spoken language at home, life's very breath, and to nurture it for generations to come should be our sacred duty.

The Jews, for two thousand years as landless, once suffered humiliations in the country after country. They have achieved a separate state, but they have restored life to that ancient language. An uncompromising faith is what we need. I teach my daughter Tamil. I always prepared to guide all other children of her age every Sunday.

Teaching our children their mother tongue is more important than dinner parties and watching video films. We have to realize that it is our duty. Every family must make it a point to teach their children Tamil for one hour. I feel that this is more important than spending time in prayers. The Tamil study group should flourish in every city and country.

I pray that this Tamil school that I am starting as an experiment will give good results in the time to come. The parents were eager to test Tamil's teaching to remedy their children's dismay.

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'Harald, what is to be done?' After returning to the city from the hills. That was their worry.
'It doesn't seem as though we can do any things further.' Harald said gloomily.
'We won't be able to go around beating them up. We have no facilities to publish pamphlets either.'
'We will go to Vadsø and buy some spray paint.'
'Why don't we buy it here?'
'Idiot! If we buy it here, the Police will be on to us!'
'Alright. It is less risky to buy it there.'

The next day Alfred went to Vadsø and returned with spray paint cans. As it was summer, most of the time, there was sunlight. They had to wait for the shield of darkness. The Tamils felt somewhat protected as they had arrested two racists. Around midnight about two or three o'clock, Alfred and Harald got an opportunity they had been waiting for that. They selected two new cars owned by Tamils and showed their handiwork. They saw to it that there was no trace of fingerprints or any other clues.

In one car, a large pig was drawn with 'Black pig get out of the country' sprayed. The other car had a dog with the words 'Beggarly dog, do you want social money?' They hoped this would make the Tamils very angry. The police's assurances that had charged Jon and Kjell would crush. They did not waste their expectations.

Headache increased again for Vegard and Asbjørn, but not get any information from those already caught. They are unassuming. Now a new problem from a new angle from a new group had emerged. Vegard believes that Jon and Kjell's associates were responsible for the fresh troubles. He did not disclose his suspicions, but he registered a new case with information received.

CHAPTER 11

THE bachelors working in factories lived in hostels. Each had a separate room to himself, which guarded their privacy and independence. But they had a shared kitchen. Like in the olden days, the Jaffna bachelors working on clerks in Colombo ran 'chummeries' they shared their food expenses. Living under the same roof, they were able to exchange ideas. They also got down magazines and papers from Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. Tamil cinema videos were available for their entertainment. Therefore, communal life was possible for them.

Vignes was waiting for his wife's arrival from his homeland, and Arjun, Amuthan, and Ragu were younger men. Their marriages were still not under consideration. They could be working themselves to the bone for the sake of their sister's wedding living back home. They tried to avoid any specific problems in a civilized way.

Recently, some of the young men had gone to a disco. There was an argument between the Tamil youth and some Norwegian who considered white skins superior. One of the drunk Norwegian had abused them in filthy language. The Tamil youth who could not bear such humiliation had assaulted him. Before the affair could escalate, they had returned to their hostel.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, a few Norwegian had banded together and marched to the hostel. Arjun had tried talking to them pacifically and explained what had happened. They had refused to listen to any explanation and tried to assault him. When he had prevented their attack and looked out, he found the hostel surrounded by other Norwegian. Amuthan and Vignes had used their wits by collecting the chili powder in the kitchen and flinging it in the faces of the Norwegian surrounding them. An older woman living in the hostel open her room door and closed it as fast as open. They also took the various implements like knives in the kitchen as their armory. The chili powder's heat had abated the war fever, which had risen to a pitch. The Norwegian withdraw. Two weeks after this incident, Alfred and Harald spray paint on the Tamil people's cars. The youth were outraged when some Tamils spoke in a knot between the two incidents.

Another event occurred that deeply upset the Tamil in Vardø. The case against Jon Kjell came up in the courts for hearing. Vegard tried his best to magnify their Neo-Nazi background. They did not prove the arson charge against them. They established the cost of Assaulting Vinayakam Pillai with circumstantial evidence. For that crime, they give a suspended sentence of eight months each. They were enough reasons for the Tamils to consider this judgment biased towards the Neo-Nazis. The Tamils have vexed that even the diligent Police intervention was insufficient to give them sufficient protection. In this context, it was scheduled the Tamil Association meeting by Satkunam, which will occur on Saturday, and everyone invites to attend. He had not only sent the notice but phoned as well, impressing the importance of the meeting. The young men were irritated that Satkunam had emphasized ‘Brother Devaguru’ will speak.

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The Tamil Association meeting was the topic of conversations at the hostel that night.

'Many of our people have elevated brother Devaguru as an important person. That is a difficult situation.' grumbled Arjun.
'Arjun, you grumbling is not fair. He is not doing anything for his benefit.' said Ragu.
'Does not a good man become crazy? He is making everybody else crazy. Now the people are listening open-mouthed while he is preaching about Gandhi.' said Amuthan.
'Those born in Gandhi's land of birth came calling themselves peacekeepers. The horrors they committed make my blood boil even now. They raped four girls inside Irupalai Temple repeatedly for three days! How can do this even someone does something they don't expect.'
'They say long live Gandhi' and have his photograph in the currency notes taken as bribes. What is the connection between non-violence and nuclear bomb blasting?' simmered Amuthan.
'We must do something.' Said Ragu.
'The Police are now vigilant. Why take unnecessary risk?' Vignes warned.
'They spat poured beer… attacked at night, burnt a house. They released the detainees. We are still blabbing about the Gandhian way?' Asked Amuthan.
'No friend, Brother Devaguru is a Wiseman. There has to be a reason for him to speak of the Gandhian way. Everything was spoilt because every movement went etch on another movement. There are own different paths to every movement. We must talk to Devaguru. Whatever you say, he is a man bound by justice.' Said Vignesh.
'You too are champing.' Asked Amuthan.
'There is no point in getting angry. We will ask at the meeting.' Said Vignesh.

'They will stamp us as trouble makers if we question at the meeting.' Said Amuthan.
'This is where we are making a mistake. Brother Devaguru has some reasons. If we don't have faith in his judgment, we should have the guts to speak up.' said Ragu.
Arjun stood up furiously. 'Why are you playing a traitor's game? Are you trying to see whether I am bold or not?'
'What nonsense is this? Everybody stops. The saying that the four Tamils can never agree on any point seems correct. Are we talking about our problems? Tomorrow, talk about whatever you want. Wow, come, let us eat. Special today is Puttu, fried prawns, and coconut gravy,' said Vignes.
'Truly, brother, your wife is fortunate. No one can make Puttu to the whole of Norway like you!' Said Ragu is trying to lighten the atmosphere.

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The meeting began at seven o'clock on Saturday. There was a murmur among the gathering while the President of the Association spoke. It was as though the audience had lost all faith in their speeches, and this attitude was harmful to Devaguru.
'Justice loses it, soul, at one stage. When Krishna went as a messenger, Duryodhana could have given the Pandavas five houses and settled. What was the great loss in giving five houses? Why did he refuse? Arrogance, pomposity. By that, he lost that last chance to stop the war. While he has immersed in such reflections.' Devaguru has asked to speak.

'The release of the Neo-Nazis has shocked and angered us. The victory of violence is an illusion. It only appears so. Why did Hitler, the godfather of Nazi doctrine, lose? His adept at annexing countries was the cause of his own country has divided. The alternative weapon of violence is non-violence meticulously.

Mahatma Gandhi applied the precept in a new environment. It said that the Sinhalese who call themselves the protectors of world Buddhism cannot understand the language of non-violence. But the white man who ruled a vast empire where the sun never set understood the strength of the language of non-violence of which Gandhi spoke. That is the peculiarity of hid. Those who live in this country are white people. Let us hope they will understand this if we have hope, patience, and love, the weapon of non-violence will succeed. I have emphasized this repeatedly, and they cannot win the quality of love over debates. It has to spring from our hearts. I don't want to speak for too long and bore you. Please give a chance for non-violence and peace to live.'
Devaguru finished his speech and sat down.

'All your bombast won't work anymore. You are repeatedly asking our people to keep quiet. The Norwegian are getting out of hand. You go and preach to your white friends like Lars about non-violence.' shouted Arjun.
'Hey! You speak with respect.' SellaKannan stood up angrily.
Devaguru got up.
'Brother SellaKannan, when you speak with disrespect, it is not right to accuse others. Arjun spoke of his opinion!'
'I am sorry, forgive me.' SellaKannan bowed his head.
'Don't change the subject. Come to the point.' Arjun insisted.
'Brother Arjun, the deeds of some Norwegian is wrong. That is true. They are doing this to make us angry. When we get angry, we lose our sense of proportion and discipline. If we react as they expect us to, we would be handing over our self-control. That is the subtle clue for success. We must not forget that this is the basis for our independence. Although he said this, he felt that he has caught at the center of a controversy. One who is involved in community service with conscientiousness is not an ascetic. Neither is he a coward who stays away from adversity. His only prayer was that love should flow from his heart to withstand them.'

There was silence in the hall for a while. Then Manavalan stood up as though he did not like that hush. He was past seventy years, and one son lived in England and another in Canada. His daughter and son-in-law were in Vardø. He had the financial means to jaunt around the world. He had once strongly argued that non-violence would never win any Tamils' rights in the homeland.

'Hey! All of you are just listening to this idiot's speechless. Already people have talked and are tired of such stories. Now he has come to talk! We are all fools, and he alone is wise. All of you! Hanging on the lion of no hope!' he trumpeted.

Everybody else seemed to have reached a paralyzed state.

'Devaguru! You first get out. 'Don't emasculate the people. Talk any more of non-violence and rubbish. You are going to get a beating from me.' He roared like an old lion.

Devaguru stood up with dignity, head held high.

'Gandhiji's words come to my mind. It is the fate of a public work to be abused. But heedless of that, to show compassion towards the abuses and pray that he should have clear thinking is my way. He enunciated every word clearly and calmly.'
'Hit him!' Manavalan yelled. No one stood up, and even the argumentative young men kept quiet, and Manavalan did not expect this.
'Sir, if by hitting me your anger would cease and by that your desire for violence is reduced, then hit me. I will accept all your blows happily. Those who accept pain to purify others are true believers of non-violence,' saying this, Devaguru walked towards Manavalan. Not expecting this, Manavalan stepped back.

Devaguru came close to Manavalan. 'Hit me till your anger abates. I do not believe in violence.' Devaguru grasped both Manavalan's hands and struck his cheeks with them. Manavalan pulled his hands back. He felt ashamed. He realized that there was something wrong with his conduct. He bowed his head and walked out of the hell slowly.

A hush pervaded the gathering. As though Devaguru wished to break it. Devaguru said,

'We have to expect this in a democratic exchange of opinions. To observe peace and reconciliation amidst contradictions in human life is not easy. But we have to learn a lesson from this and progress. Please understand one thing. If I had started a slanging match with brother Manavalan, the reaction would have differed. Because I was prepared to accept a beating, an ugly incident was vested. If this was possible among us, why should it be impossible with Norwegian? I ask you to consider this acutely. Thank you.'

He wished everyone and calmly started walking. Ragu followed him like a close disciple. Arjun, Amuthan, and Vignes got into the car.

'Ragu won't come now. He must have gone to brother Devaguru's house.'
'Yes. Ragu is trying to be a little Gandhi.'
'Why, friend, if you had joined, brother Manavalan could have disrupted the meeting, is that not so?'
'Disrupting the meeting is not our notion. We believe there is a problem for us Tamils living here. Devaguru believes it too. We differ in the approach to solving that problem. But brother Deveguru has honesty in him.'

'We cannot dispute that. The trouble Deveguru takes to teach our children Tamil' Really he does not just preach, he practices it two. It is difficult to find such a gem among our worthless lot.'
'You seem to have changed sides.'
'Am I standing for an election by changing sides? Somehow I feel friends that brother Devaguru is to be respected. I think he is a deep and sincere man.'

Their car started moving.

CHAPTER 12

DEVAGURU was up early, even though it was Sunday. He conducted Tamil classes in the morning. The parents felt it was more convenient to have the evening courses during winter. So, starting from today, the classes were to be in the evening. Because of this, he had agreed to go to the hostel to meet the young men in the morning. Ragu had enthusiastically arranged for this meeting. Devaguru believed the meeting's differences could mend the other day today. He invited the Association President Satkunam also to be present. The latter agreed to come and offered to take him to the hostel in the car.

There was plenty of time for him to come. Devguru was concerned about the news that the Australian Tamil woman in Tamil Nadu had been arrested and imprisoned on conspiracy charges against the state.

There were contradictory items of this information that were coming in. So, to find out the actual state of affairs, he wrote to his friend and mentor, Ramanathan. Ramanathan wrote a detailed reply to that. After he wrote that letter, Ramanathan had fallen ill, and his letters became short.
Subsequently, when Ramanathan died, Devaguru had a feeling that the mystic bridge between him and Tamil Nadu had crumbled. He took that letter and reread it today.

My Dear Devaguru,

You have asked many questions. Indeed, the Australian woman and the three people conversing with her and a local doctor arrested by police. They detained her for conspiring to smuggle medicines to Tamil Eelam. Drugs not a banned item for the Tamils living in Eelam across the sea, or not for the fighters. The suffering displaces people, old and young, living in the Vanni Forests. There are no medicines. The Sri Lankan government schemes to let them die without medications by the hundreds if not thousands. This act is barbarism beyond the norms of World Humanitarian concerns. Tamil Nadu has made the world aware. It is a grand conspiracy to even think of sending medicines to the refugees, orphans, maybe wounded fighters! In such marvelous land, where could we search for humanism?

Periyar wanted humanity to be free of the shackles of superstition. He realized that the religious practices and rituals had imprisoned humanity. He insisted, 'Throw away your belief in God; only then will you stand upright like a man.' How could anyone expect truth and justice from those who smeared tar on the white beard of Periyar, saying 'there are one race and one God' for Political gains? Could this be reviewed democratically? No! the head would be decapitated after brave, cinematic speeches about 'how could their honorable' politics be sullied! 'Argan domination,' North is growing, South is deteriorating.' 'Dravidians Culture' are all empty slogans.
Poompuhar Valluvar memorial and other such structures are just decorations. In the forty years of Dravida rule, what achievement have they produced? After Anna's demise, setting one caste against another has been cunningly promoted. Today each caste has a party on the warpath with the others. The greed for political power alone has become society's life. Not only selfishness but fear touches become pervasive.

The haste to grab whatever is possible before losing power and position is selfish and a politician's fear. Those who live in fear need intoxication ‘slogans’ ‘grand processions acquisitions’ transformed into intoxication objects. I can only see the Tamil consciousness on advertising boards. The rest of every other immoral perception that should shun in public life has fostered.

Once, you said that U.N.P stood for Uncle Nephew Party. Here, it is even better. The Dravida party has shrunk itself to Father Son and Nephew! The Dravida parties that have run in opposition to this state of affairs that rose bravely to oppose Brahmin dominance now screams that there is no room for leaving Adi Dravida's leadership. It is prudent to understand that the gem of blood beyond Dravida but capable of leadership is Adi Dravida. In the midst of all this, nod approval to the RAW propaganda, which demonizes the youth fighting for the honor of the Tamils as the world leper on the one hand, and shouts slogans that the world protects Tamils on the other hand, what kind of dense unscrupulous ignorance is this and necessary?

Here all moral rectitudes are dead. Gandhi is a faint memory. Otherwise, in Gujarat, the state of his birth, would the horror of massacring some Christians who were only on Christmas day take place? In Madhya Pradesh, the nuns are doing excellent service to the people forcibly raped.
Hindu Tura leaders make daring speeches asking whether the nuns' purity is exceptional. Just as Buddhism chased out from Indian soil, it seems that Gandhism has also driven out. How to speak of the horrors of extremism that assassinated Gandhi as a means of coming to power?

Periyar, who emphasized rational thinking, has been held above reasonable inquiry. That accused like that. But how can one accept the wickedness of using the name Periyar as a label for Political merchandise? Could anyone have forecast when Brezhnev was head of the Soviet Union that would dismember it into many pieces within a decade? If somebody had even suggested it, he would have been called a lunatic. But what did happen? Whether Will India be a single entity in the 21'st century? I pray every day that it should be so. But as though my prayers should not get an answer any time, the people are viciously enslaved. But, never in the annals of history has tyranny helped preserve a country's unity.

I always learn a lot from real Eelam freedom fighters. Intellectuals who believe that slander is a sign of expressing their national devotion are flourishing in Tamil Nadu. I want to see if it's the kind of ghost that one does with Tirupatiyan baldness! I think Sinhalese chauvinism is what created the Tamil militants. The more outrageous the brutality of the oppression, the more sacrificial pulse and willingness to be obedient supports the militants. This simple understanding seems to be taken seriously by political leaders who insist on unity in the country as 'one race, one language, and religion.' The letter continued. But, someone rang the doorbell. Devaguru folded the letter carefully, put it away in his file, and hastened to open the door.

Nithya was at the door. Satkunam came inside, and when he saw Devaguru, he said, 'Brother, the boys will be waiting. We shouldn't delay.'

'Have some refreshments'
'They will give us. Let's go.'
'Nithya! Lock the door. We are going to Ragu's hostel.' said Devaguru.

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This talk happens In the hostel.

'Brother, Please, understand us. We don't like violence for the sake of violence. It seems you were the first to be beaten up at night. You did not divulge this to anyone. Then it was Vinayakam Pillai. Since they did not call them to account, they defaced the cars. If done nothing to, what is the certainty that they will not persecute all of us? That is why we were annoyed the other day.' Arjun tried to rope Devaguru into their circle.

Amuthan said, 'You are speaking of some principles, and your viewpoint is sincere. We do not deny that. But we can't understand your reasoning. You go along on your route, and we will go on our route. If one does not work, the other will!' 'In our homeland too, it was this two routes reasoning that spoiled everything. Let the boys carry on with their battles in Jaffna; we will make use of that attack and talk about justice in Colombo was the way Lieutenant Amirthalingam estimated. What happened afterward? On the public stage, I talk of righteousness. I can understand your rage. That is why I have come to discuss this among these four walls. Alright, you beat them up. But one thing, you must find out who assaulted Vinayakam or sprayed the cars and beat them!'

Devaguru paused, and there was silence. Ragu squirmed. He continued. 'Vinayakam is innocent. We are very sorry he had assaulted. There is a rule in delivering judgment. Some culprits can escape punishment but should not punish an innocent man. That is of great importance. What guarantees you will not beat up and wound an innocent Norwegian, perhaps someone sympathetic towards us? Are we God to punish others? The wheels of the law turn but slowly!'

Arjun snapped, 'Brother, do you or do you not support the war for liberation in our homeland?'
'Yes. I do. I support it one hundred percent.' said Devaguru with firm resolution.
Vignes joined in the conversation. 'There you are supporting the struggle. But you are saying that it is wrong to fight here. They both seem contradictory to each other?'

'They do not seem contradictious to me. There are some truths we must examine with intrinsic soul searching. The ordinary Sinhalese people are peaceful, affectionate, and friendly. This experience is the experience of many Tamils, and we must not force that. The reasons for the war in Sri Lanka are fear and tyranny. Politicians who have forgotten patriotism, Bhikkhus who have forgotten The Buddha**,** intellectuals who have lost their conscience, these people have instigated a fear among the Sinhalese people. They have fed the fear that eighteen million Tamils live in the North across the narrow Palk Straits. The Eelam Tamils will join them and dominate the Sinhalese. They point out the invasion of a hoary part in history and scare them that it could happen again. They have deeply embedded this apprehension in the psyche of the Sinhalese. Because of this, the kind and essentially good ordinary Sinhalese man, when he becomes a political animal and a voter encompassed in an illusion, act with hatred and hostility. This act is a great sorrow.'

'What sort of democracy has there been in Ceylon for the past fifty years? In historical times when Anuradhapura was the capital, there was rivalry between the Hamla Karnars and the Mauritians for the throne. Similarly, the political wrestling between the Senanayake's and the Bandaranaike's has been the democratic politics of Ceylon for the past fifty years. For this, the Tamil demon chanted like magic. The war has enriched those governing and their lackeys. Those countries in the World that called themselves the guardians of democracy are watching the frauds perpetrated in the name of democracy and are doing nothing. This thing is the greatest tragedy!'

'The part played by fear is understood. But what about the tyranny?' Ragu asked.
'Gandhiji has clearly explained about tyranny. Just as the fire burnishes gold, the tyranny will enhance an individual or a community. Tyranny provokes the utilization of the total inner power. When there is danger, sacrifice and courage become conspicuous. The antithesis of tyranny is the righteousness of the fighters. If you consider the Tamil actions, you can understand this by looking at the timeline before and after 1983. The antonym of fear on the side and the antonym of tyranny on the other side are battling. It is fair for the voice of love to be heard amidst this. I believe that to awaken the slumbering humanism, the voice of love will be valuable; this is the reason I have come forward as a propagandist of non-violence and to live as its ardent servant.'

Said Devaguru. It was a new experience for the young man listening to him speaking in an even tone without anger at any stage in his discourse.

'Are there non-Tamils who call the liberation struggle in our homeland as terrorism and like to appear as votaries of non-violence with a dislike of war?

When you speak of love and non-violence, why should we not infer that you are voicing them?' Arjun asked.

Devaguru closed his eyes, deep in thought. A smile appeared, and then there was repose on his face.

'When moral values become immoral, the justification for war is obtained. When all doors are closed against righteousness, war alone could become just. That is why the Geta teacher, Lord Krishna, took the side of the warrior Arjuna's mind became his charioteer. The injustices of war justify spying. Did not Judas betray Jesus for a mere thirty pieces of silver? Five years in Parliament as members ensures a pension. Are there not Tamils hankering after this?'

Devaguru takes a pause and seemingly searching for appropriate words to continue.

'Is Kadirgamar roaming around the World denigrating the LTTE as terrorists because he wants a pension?' Amuthan asked.
'Maybe Kadirgamar's foster mother was a Sinhalese!' Arjun said sarcastically.
Devaguru was silent for a while.
'Brother, why are you not speaking?' Ragu asked.
'You are young men. You are bound to have hatred. It is better to air it within this room. There should be an outlet for the resentment of Youth.'
'We are like your younger brothers. If we have said something wrong, you must correct us. We are speaking frankly. That is all.' Vignes said in a pleading tone.

'One thing you must realize clearly! 'LTTE are terrorists! We are not prepared to have any talks with them'. Kadirgamar says this Is the case across the country and on stage? Thus the meanings he points out without saying are important.'

‘I am endeavoring to make milk and honey of peace overflow in Sri Lanka. The terrorists are opposed to this. By asserting this, he clearly states that he is not a Tamil. After this, any research regarding his foster mother is a matter of indifference. What is significant is whether LTTE is a terrorist or not. We separated into many different combatant groups and destroyed ourselves. Many groups were involved in fratricide, and we were encouraged in this infighting by specific external forces. The loss and heartache are terrible. I know that through personal experience. But we have to forget all that, enough of living and languishing in yesteryears. We have to face the future with courage. Eelam Tamils are at a turning point in history at the beginning of the millennium. The obligations to the community have to be fulfilled by everyone. The fighters' duties and responsibilities are different from those of the Tamils living overseas as migrants. We should not forget that.’
‘Statistics say that sixty thousand Tamils have killed in our motherland. There may bury among the graves in the soil of Eelam, many horrific deeds by the Sinhala army that would put even Hitler’s army to shame. Whatever it is, showing as reasons the injustices in our motherland, the losses to our kith and kin, eight hundred thousand Eelam, Tamils, are living in many different parts of the world as immigrants. Of these, would not at least one hundred thousand be of combatant age? If they two had become fighters, think what the equations would be? I am not denigrating them as cowards or against our homeland's restoration. They will have justifiable reasons for living abroad. I, you, and all of them have renounced the right to engage in the war of liberation. No one cannot deny that!

But still, the love of the country of your birth and the Tamil community consciousness should be the sacred duty for every one of us, even for another few centuries. This profound sense of responsibility will restore our motherland's lost rights.

I don't know anything about the Tamils' circumstances living in Canada and Australia. But take the people here in Norway. However much we may try, could we change our children into Norwegian? What is the use of changing them? If our homeland liberated, will they return there? What is their worthiness to go there and start a new life? What is their qualification to go and start a new life? The future of our children depends on finding a reasonable answer to these questions.'

'By propagating the image of Tamils as Terrorists and rowdies, which the Sinhala Chauvinism has let loose in their propaganda, would it not mean that we are acknowledging that? To put it in another way, we must learn to live as a good-citizens to honor the sanctity of liberation. I genuinely have a grievance. There are scums of society calling themselves Tamils living among us, who still adhere to the unjust and harsh caste and dowry systems even after emigrating. Tamil consciousness, pride in the race, and attachment to the language are forsaken in the newly found wealth, leading to snobbish prattle. That isn't very kind.

To remove this, I staunchly believe that Gandhi's non-violence will help for the self-purification of minds. We should also not forget our way of love and moral rectitude in the countries we have adopted will help mobilize support and sympathy for the war of liberation in our homeland.'

Devaguru concluded his long speech.

Arjun and Amuthan were amazed at the truths shining from his force of arguments and definitions. They had never known that Devaguru's Tamil attachment was rooted so deeply. Respect for him grew. They knew that he researched religions and was involved in a review of Gandhian precepts.

But they were surprised that he very well informed him about the Tamil problems. They had wanted to argue with him. Now they wished he would share his wisdom with them, elevating him to a teacher's level.

'But we have certain queries. You have taken the trouble to visit us. Whether you have the time or not….' Arjun hesitated. 'Young brothers, why don't you prepare another cup of tea? Just like the way made back home. Plain tea. He has come over to talk with you.' said Satkunam, who had been a silent listener all along. Ragu went to prepare the tea.

Devaguru rose and walked around the room. There were two magazines from India on Ragu's table. One of them was supportive of the Tamil Eelam cause. Devaguru had contacts with that one.
Ragu and Vignes brought in the tea.

'We are outraged Chandrika said in South Africa that Tamils are recent settlers in Ceylon.' Amuthan said with resentment. 'She is now living with the thrill of whisky, it seems. Is this the way a leader speaks? Like babbling in a drunken stupor…' Arjun's hatred came to the fovea.

Before their indignation escalated, Devaguru started to speak. 'Anger dulls the intelligence. This matter applies to everybody. Will a dog and a cat produce a litter together? But a lion had a woman as mistress, and she created a son and daughter. It seems that brother and sister married, and their descendants are the Sinhalese, they say. How could anyone talk about justice and reason with people who believe such indecent rubbish as gospel? President Chandrika herself does not know what percentage of pure Sinhala blood runs in her veins. Her great grandfather Ratwatte Dissave was one of those who handed over the Kandyan kingdom to the British.

In that document, he signed in Tamil, it seems. Did the Ratwatte disdain the Sinhalese language, or did he not know Sinhala? It would be a good idea even to scrutinize this.

The political capital of Sri Lanka today is Jayawardenepura Kotte. President Jayawardene's ludicrous and presumptions activities with that name were many, and James Ratnam proved through his investigation that Jayawardene had Muslim blood in him. His great grandfather's great grandfather handed over the Kotte kingdom to the Portuguese. Chandrika's uncle Aniruddha Ratwatte played a lame drama when the Sinhala Army captured the Jaffna soil. He bragged that he had repeated the brave actions of Sapumal Kumaraya. This Sapumal Kumaraya was a Tamil from South India. Ratwatte forgot that this man had beheaded the Sinhala king of the time and had conquered and reigned in Kotte. Alahakoon or another South Indian Tamil established Jayawardenepura Kotte and made it the capital. That was also conveniently forgotten. Just think how the Sinhalese intellectuals who are ignorant of, or are intentionally concealing the history of a few centuries, could prevaricate about what happened two thousand years ago. Before the Sinhala civilization, Tamil civilization was widespread throughout Sri Lanka. Recent excavations reveal that. Dance of Sinhala intellectual is not the only one to bury this historical knowledge in the graves.

I tend to waste time trying to teach a lesson to two or three Norwegian, how much better it could be if used to spread information about our hereditary rights in our mother country. Our fighters are donating their lives and sacrificing their morrows in the battlefront, living only for today. Is it moral for the Tamils living overseas to spend their time in parties and enjoyments, forgetting the future?

The Tamil knowledge of the Tamil children and their roots' culture should protect that and keep alive by every single Tamil living away from the mother country, and that is their paramount duty. I emphatically say that. These are productive services, actions of love.' Devaguru drank the remaining tea.

'The Indian position in our affairs is very worrying.' You were born to do good; if you cannot do good, at least desist from evil actions.' This philosophy was born on that soil. Even the papers that brag that their circulation runs into hundreds of thousands are writing, editorials debasing our liberation struggle is a matter of sorrow.' Ragu spoke of an issue that was vexing him.

'Indian position is apparent. The previous political leaders of the Eelam Tamils fed them with false hope. Indianism has a particular posture. It feels that by token of their population and vast geographical area, a superpower status is its entitlement. This stand is due to fear, ignorance, and selfishness. Those mean intellectuals do not realize that this is against the purity of Indian spirituality. India has concerns about Pakistan, China, and America. If India that talks of spirituality are at the forefront of producing nuclear weapons that it can ill afford, this fear is behind it. Even the haste wishing to be a permanent member of the Security Council is who a sigh of this fear! India calculated the independence of Bangladesh to reduce the prosperity of Pakistan. It was not an act of humanitarian concern. Supporting Tamil Eelam will destroy India's Unity and promote separatist tendencies are assessments born of ignorance. Khalistan separatist campaign or Assamese separatist struggle? The puerile advisors are planning in Delhi without the Tamil knowledge that the Sinhala establishment is India's enemy. They are ignorant that an independent Tamil Eelam in the south would be a friendly country. Romesh Bhandari instigated. The discord at the Thimphu conference.

Was there ever an inquiry into how far selfish concerns entered into it? What was the background to the gift of a diamond necklace valued at twelve hundred thousand rupees? How far did the public's distraction from the Bofors scandal play a part in sending the armed forces to Eelam? How many people pursue the truth in all this? How many Indian soldiers gave their lives fighting on behalf of the Sinhala racist dominance? However, where the Indian Army deported after being insulted by Sinhala politicians? Even after these indignities, who are those planning the policies supportive of the Sinhalese? How many conscientious Indians are there who ponder about all this?

Tamil Nadu's brahmins live in fear of the Dravidian parties' dominance and their mounting propaganda. Should view their fears with sympathy. How far will their 'North is our homage' be capable of removing their apprehensions? They should have some analytical heart-searching about this.

Rajaji was qualified in every aspect to be appointed the first President of India. Why was that chance not given to him? A.P Venkateswaran, a Tamil, was the secretary for Foreign Affairs. He was well versed in the Sinhala Tamil problem. Why was he thrown out of the Foreign Affairs ministry with ignominy? Do the Northern Politicians consider Tamil Nadu's brahmins as and when to be used and thrown out? Are there no intellectuals and journalists among the Tamil Nadu brahmins who could sincerely review all these? I am unable to answer many more such questions. I will ask you some more questions regarding the Indian position that are unanswerable.
Why did Madam Indra bring Sanjay to Politics overlooking the older son Rajiv? During her emergency rule and the subsequent autocratic rule, where was Rajiv? What was his political standing?

Was it not Madam Indra's opinion that Rajiv was not suited to politics? How many have punished for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi? Who planned that Rajiv's assassination should have punished, but innocent obey orders, for many life sentences? What was the part played by the Tamil President Venkatraman in that? Why are the officials and the Judiciary keen to execute a mini massacre regarding Rajiv's assassination for maybe one person fauld? There have been no parties in Gandhi and Nehru, Ambedkar, or India. Why is there a party, even though it is only a letter pad one, in the name of Rajiv? Widow Sonia Gandhi claiming she is the lawful heir to the Nehru dynasty, is storming through the country with her political propaganda. But, in Tamil Nadu, Rajiv's funeral dirges are carefully preserved even after many years. Why is that?'
'Brother, you are piling questions after questions. Where will we search the answers?' laughed Arjun.

'It is for the Indian citizens to find the answers for the sake of healthy politics in India. That is wisdom in a civilized way. It would be presumptuous otherwise. I am annoyed by some of the Tamil Nadu journalists who push themselves forward to announce what the Eelam Tamil's standpoint should be. But I don't want to make the same mistake. But one thing, it is easy to understand the Central Government ministers 'embrace of Chandrika. They massacre the innocent unarmed people next door. 'This is his internal affair. We must not intervene,' talked about our rights. But, the hurts and injuries of the oppressed forgot soon. Applying balm to the oppressor if he should sprain himself is seriously considered. It seems that this century's great tragedy will continue to the next. What happened to the love and justice nurtured by great souls like the Buddha, Mahaveera, Rama Krishna, and Gandhi? What a mighty India! Every Eelam Tamil lovingly worships India as the eternal spring of their religion and culture.

The high point of this life was to step on India's soil. When did that sacred soil start trampling humanism to destruction? Why? My parent's ardent desire was to die only after a pilgrimage to Chidambaram and Varanasi. We are the great souls whose contributions to that soil made it a great nation? Brothers, you won't believe me; I had spent sleepless nights, sorrowfully wondering when and how did India lose its humanitarian charity.'

Devaguru paused, his voice constricting with emotion. There was a profound silence.

'Please forgive us. We realize that we have been jumping around with the wrong interpretations.' Said Arjun.
'You must show us how we can serve usefully.' Said Amuthan.
Ragu warned affectionately, 'We have so much to learn from you. We will visit you and trouble you.'
'You are welcome any time. The doors of wisdom and love should always remain open. I am happy to have had this conversation with you.'

Devaguru stood up to leave. Satkunam and the young man accompanied him.

CHAPTER 13

VARDØ was enjoying peace. This time cheered the Tamils. Everyone forgot the troubles and became involved with their own business for some time. Jon did not like Tamil's complacency. He believed that even if cannot drive them out of Norway, we should terrorize those pigs into leaving Vardø.

After the Police intervention, four met a few times secretly. But they had not planned anything constructive.
Even though Jon was a part of that group, he felt safer to act separately. It gave him further confidence that his previous operation had still not expos. He decided that something else should be planned well and executed.

It was summer now. The sun was shining like a guardian transforming night into day. He was afraid to do anything in this period. It had to do without being caught, so he decided to bide his time.

Winter began. It was as though the Sun refused even to pup the whole day and had gone south. This darkness and cold weather are painful to many, particularly the Tamils, but to Jon, it gives pleasure. He thought this was the best time to frighten and shock the Tamil pigs. He planned very meticulously to evade being caught by the Police. He traveled to Kirkenes by plane, and he booked himself into a hotel. He had a false driving license. He showed that and rented a car. The idea occurred while he was returning.

There was hardly any snow. The wind was not harsh either. He decided he would go to the hills and return to the city at night about one o'clock. He drove up to a small house in the mountain and parked his car at the back. He opened the door and let himself in, and He felt tired. He lit the fireplace and lay down on a bunk. Soon he was fast asleep.

*

Kokila held her ear and started crying. Her weeping increased as time went on. Nithya did not know what to do. She wiped the ears first; Kokila would not let the mother touch her. She was afraid to clean inside the ear. With Malathi's help, she managed to clean the affected ear with the most significant difficulty.

Nithya was tired by the time she finished. Kokila was still sobbing. She refused to heed the mother's soothing words that it would heal soon. It was hell for Nithya to watch the tender little gives agony. She phoned Devaguru.

'It's me, Nithya.'
'Kokila is suffering from pain in her ear.'
'Did you wipe it? Wash it with saltwater?'
'I wiped it. But Kokila is still in agony. The doctor might scold me if I poured saltwater. I am afraid, will you please come?'
'To be afraid of just this. . .'
'Please.'
'Alright. I will come; you get Kokila ready.'

He informed the foreman and hurriedly left for home. There Nithya and Malathi were finding it very difficult to get Kokila ready. Kokila's screams increased when she saw the father. He hurriedly went into the bathroom and washed the fishy odor of himself.

He took them to the hospital without delay. They could not see the doctor immediately and had to wait. It must have been a busy day for the medical staff at that time, and they were rushing around. At last, Kokila's clamor drew the attention of the doctor. He examined her and poured some fluid into her ear. That was all. Nithya was not satisfied with the treatment, but she could not say it aloud.

They returned home. Kokila would not let them sleep. It was midnight, and still, she had not stopped crying. Nithya was worn out trying and soothe her. Devaguru felt sorry for them. He first thought of phoning Doc Lars and then changed his mind and rang the number he usually contacted at night. He was able to speak to a lady doctor and explained the seriousness of the child's condition. He asks to come immediately.

Malathi was fast asleep. It was a quarter to one, and she hated her sleep being disturbed. Devaguru was in a dilemma about when to wake her or not.

'Let us not wake Malathi. We will be back soon, won't we?' Said Nithya.

There was a lady doctor now in the hospital. She examined Kokila with care and kindness. She cleaned her ear and again put some medicine in it, and she gave two kinds of pills and got Kokila to swallow them immediately. It may have been a sedative. She was already tired, and soon she fell asleep. Nithya consol to see the little one cured of her pain.

The lady doctor had heard about Devaguru's services through Lars. She had also wanted to meet him. As there were no other patients at the time, she was relaxed and talked to Devaguru at length. She said she wanted to join with Lars and fight against racism and violence. Their conversation turned to the Gandhian path, and the doctor and Devaguru enthusiastically exchanged views. Nithya did not interrupt their conversation. When Nithya looked at the time, she was shocked. It was nearly an hour since they had come into the hospital.

'Malathi will be scared if she wakes up. She may cry.'
'Oh! ok, we will go soon.'
'When you get a chance to speak on your favorite topic, you forget everything.'
The doctor blinked, not understanding. For the sake of courtesy, Devaguru explained their conversation in Norwegian.
'Oh. Sorry. The child should not be left alone.'
'We had no other option in our haste.'
'Go home soon. Bye'
'Bye.'

*

Jon got into his car with the petrol bomb he had assembled. The time was about a quarter past one. He put his gloves on. It was dark, and the streets were empty. He had decided where he would throw the bomb earlier in the day. 'It is this pig that is spoiling all the plans. Even some of our devils believe him and are supporting him. If not for him, the Tamils will rise in fury and do something. Then it would be easy to divide our people from them. Our plans will succeed, and Jon drove the car with homicidal thoughts.

He reached Devaguru's house, and Jon was keen to break Devaguru's leadership. Jon thought that the whole family would be inside. Somehow, he felt afraid and troubled. The next moment his racist malevolence took over.

He wore the mask quickly as soon as he parked the car. He jumped out. With an iron bar he had bought with him, he tapped the kitchen glass window. A large hole appeared. The rest of the glass cracked. In the silence of the night, the sound seemed to be loud to him. It did not matter. He lit the Petrol bomb and threw it into the kitchen, aiming at the cooker. The bottle crashed, the flames caught, burning with strength. It would.

Only afterward he noticed that the pig's car was missing. That stung him. Anyway, to linger any longer was dangerous. Jon did not wait. His car sped towards Kirkenes.

The house was blazing. The neighboring households awoke. The fire brigade was informed, which arrived within minutes. The flames were too intense for anyone to get close. There were sounds of blasts from inside. No one knew who was inside. But still, two of the firefighters were inside in an instant.

*

Kokila asleep, Nithya was eager to get home and put her to bed. Devaguru was driving the car reflecting on the conversation with the lady doctor. He was pleased that the Norwegians welcomed his efforts to promote goodwill and humanism.

It was Nithya who first realized the horror.

'Look there! Our house has caught fire.' she screamed.

There were erects barriers in front of the house for the people's safety. The flames were to sees everywhere. The firefighters were spraying water in large hoses to control the tongues of love that were leaping high. Devaguru parked the car and ran towards the house. Nithya put the sleeping Kokila on the car seat and ran behind him. Shocked at the burning house, she remembered Malathi was still sleeping inside and went almost crazy.

'Oh, my child Malathi is inside the house. Run get her out. I will die without her!' She shrieked.
The firefighters who had gone in came out through the flames carrying Malathi. She was handed over immediately to the ambulance waiting outside. Devaguru and Nithya struggled to see their child but were held back by the Police. 'Time is important. You can go to the hospital to see her' they consoled the parents.

There was a large crowd outside the burning house. There were Tamils among them. They stood frozen as though they lost for words of sympathy to the parents of the burnt child. Devaguru got into his car quickly, and Nithya followed him. Their car followed the ambulance towards the hospital.
The fire brigade was still busy battling the blaze, closing the flames from enveloping the whole building.

'I don't know what to say. We could not help your child,' the doctor told them.

CHAPTER 14

RAGU had no idea why Devaguru had asked him to come. Nithya said he was having a bath and asked him to take a seat. He sat and gazed at her. She seemed to have changed in appearance. The house seemed to have lost its delight. When Malathi was alive, she would have come running, calling,
'Uncle' and sit on his lap. Today she is not here. .? Kokila was sitting on the floor playing alone. She had no one to compete too. No one to fight with her. Is fighting part of the joys of life?

'How are you sister?'
'Just existing.'
'You said you wanted to return!...'
'So, I said.'
'Why? Doesn't brother like the idea?'
'If he didn't like it to say so in one sentence can be understood. But he is saying so many things.'
'What does he say?'

Devaguru came out of the bathroom.

'Here, he has come. You ask him why. I will prepare tea for both of you.' Nithya said and went into the kitchen.
'Why, brother….' Ragu drawled. Devaguru understood what he was asking, and he lifted the playing child affectionately onto his lap.

'She is pining with grief over the loss of Malathi. I understand. Only time can serve in the learning process of forgetting such losses. I have suffered enough in issues by giving emotions a prime place. That was due to immaturity. Now I want to live by drawing strength from the truth; this is my way. I will not say only my way is right and compel Nithya. My wife is independent. Only when she endorses it will I be able to live as a whole man.'
'What does sister say?'

Nithya brought tea and served them both.

'Ragu is asking a question. You answer.'
'What am I to say? I have lost my little chick I raised with care and love in this country. I want to bring up at least Kokila in the proper way.'
'Where do you want to bring her up?' Ragu asked with interest.
'At first in India, Tamil Nadu was where I thought we coved go and live.'
'Yes, sister. From Oslo, about five or six people, in Denmark too. Leaving their wives and children to live there, they send money from here. Children also say they study well. '
'Did I deny it? I said I would leave them there if she wanted it.'
'Then why, sister?'
'He will have to suffer here alone. Work in this penetrating cold. Send money every month. In the pretext of rearing a child, I will live extravagantly. I don't want that: adversity or prosperity, joy or sorrow. We must be together and experience it. I am not prepared to say you look after yourself here and leave him. In family life, till death part us, there are duties of a wife to her husband. I may be old-fashioned. I will not give up my duties and rights. I have told him that.'
'She wants you to go with her. That is the point.'

'This is where the problem arises. Take the various countries in the world. Based on human rights and humanitarian grounds, our people have been granted refugee status initially and subsequently citizenship. This practice is the common rule followed by the civilized world. But India? Tamil Nadu? Every Eelam Tamils view with suspicion. Without any foundation, a seal is punched as a 'Tiger Supporter' and harassed. Opposing the Tigers has become the principle of the media. LTTE may have done something wrong, for that can't punish all Eelam Tamils people. As for the government servants, it is an instant source of income. For the Politicians holding onto their chairs at any cost is their Machiavellism. The soil that once spoke brave cinema dialogue 'Tamil Nadu succors those who seek it' today has become a hell on earth to the refugees. I have enjoyed Tamil Nadu's hospitality once I have not forgotten that. But today, to surrender my dignity to prostitute my self-respect and live in uncaring alien soil, daily confronting humiliation, I am not prepared to live like that. I prepare to spend the most productive part of my life on bettering my family. But at what price? This question of the family is Ragus's problem.'

'Ragu, I understand his feelings. They say, now there are no problems in Colombo. Some people here are arranging to return there. I heard this too, I have suggested.'

'Are we not requesting refugee status because we cannot live in amity with the Sinhalese? Are we liars, then? Are they not propagandizing that the Tamils are not Political refugees; they are economic refugees' Should we lead credence to that? In 1958 when we were beaten up and afflicted, we embarked on ships to Jaffna promising never to return to Colombo; then how many returned, saying that they went back to Colombo to see if the situation was right now? How many of them bought a house in Colombo?

Then in 1983, how everything went wrong? For how long will this typically last in Colombo? Does the government give any sort of guarantee to normal conditions? Never mind, did we not reject the Sri Lankan citizenship and become citizens here? Is acceptance of citizenship for our convenience? Is it! Horrible conduct to relinquish our moral obligations for the sake of comforts or afflictions? Even now, I am ready. Let us go to the forests of Vanni and live there. It is that soil that embodies our thirst for freedom and faith. Those people's losses are very significant under the mantle of those losses; let us seek consolation for our failures. How very selfish is it to expect somebody or someone else's children to fight for the liberation of our soil? Forgetting their distress, how many selfish people are wallowing in frivolous pleasures? The loss of Malathi is excellent. We cannot bear it. But after considerable thought, I am proud to think that she is in some way a symbol of the self-sacrificing spirit of the bravery of the Eelam Tamils who are waging a lengthy battle to sustain the distinctiveness of the Tamil race.'

Devaguru's voice faltered. He set Kokila down from his lap. That was a house given by the Municipal council. He walked towards the window and opened it. The cold breeze blew in. Perhaps needed that child to cool his smoldering heart!

Nithya was hugging Kokila, quietly weeping. Is life an eternal battle between principles and attachments? Ragu went near Devaguru.

'How did you come here?' Devaguru asked.
'Vignes dropped me. Why?'
'I will drop you off at the hostel. It is good for sister to cry a little.'
'Brother Devaguru has always been different. A distinctive man. Is he living in an imaginary world? Or will there be new accords through his great ideals and services?'

Ragu stood deep in thought. There was a sound of knocking on the door. Nithya took Kokila in her arms and went quickly into the bedroom.

Before Devaguru could move, Ragu offered to open the door. When he opened the door, Lars was waiting outside. Ragu welcomed him in. after the usual preliminary courtesies, Lars asked,

'Is Devaguru in?'
'Yes, he is in.' Lars came in and sat down.
'Where is Nithya?' he asked softly.
'Shall I call her?'
'No. medicines?'
'It would be a good idea to go somewhere with the family.'
'I am planning that according to your advice. It will take another two months at least. Nithya's cousin lives in France. We have also never been to France.'
'There is plenty to see in France. It is a lovely country. A change will be constructive.'
'I understand, Doctor.'
'Did you watch yesterday's T.V. program?'
'It was hurtful.'
'Forme too. My wife pain by it. It is ridiculous to argue that foreigners are criminals because the native people live in fear. The horrors perpetrated against the Tamils in those countries have covered up.'
'In every country, there are extremists. There is a movement to resurrect Hitler.'
'You are quite right. Astrid immediately phoned the NRK and criticized it as a disgraceful program, and they have to show an alternate program with our Vardø Non-violence Society. I want two Tamils and two others to participate. What do you think?'

'Good. It would be beneficial if knowledgeable people take part.'
'Correct. You must be a part of it.'
'I am not very fluent in Norwegian.'
'It is not the language but the truth that matters. Who is the other Tamil?'
'A young voice would be good.'
'As you wish. Will you give me a name in three days?'
'Yes.'
'Another thing' started Lars and then hesitated, seemingly unwilling to speak in front of Ragu.'
'Ragu is trustworthy.'
'The same group that set fire to SellaKannan's house may have burnt your house too, suspects Vegard.'
'I also have similar suspicious . . . I am thinking of talking to that peoples.'
'They have acted with criminal intent. Do you think that people will speak to you with due consideration? I think you are their target. So, as it is?'
'I believed that should give truth and non-violence a chance. They may be ignorant. Even they may be able to realize their ignorance and fear.'
'Devaguru. You are certainly an unusual man, and your thoughts are exalted. Anitha wants to see you. Please come home when you are free.'

You can come for dinner; then, Lars stood up to leave.

CHAPTER 15

'HELLO, It's me, Arjun.'
'Tell me, brother.'
'I just saw them. I know the house. It belongs to Alfred. They are all there.'
'What shall we do?'
'If we go immediately, we can see them. Today is Friday. Once they start boozing, they won't listen to you at all.'
'Are you speaking from the hostel?'
'No, on my way . . . in ten minutes, I will be at your house.'
'Alright. Before that, I will take Kokila to SellaKannan's place and leave her there.'
'Do, that brother.'
'Arjun, please understand me and take offense. You must not talk anything.'
'Is that all your perception of me, brother? The tail won't wag while there is a head.'
'It is not head or tail; this is an experiment with truth. That is why we have to be careful. Right. Come soon.'

They drove in Devaguru's car. He stopped the car in front of the small yellow house Arjun had pointed at; this is Alfred's house. Presently he had a de facto relationship with a girl called Lena.

A dim light was visible in the house. People here liked drinking in subdued lighting.

They stepped out of the car. Devaguru hesitated for a moment. Only for a moment. He chased that illusory irresolution away. His mind cleared. Devaguru pressed the doorbell once. They waited. No one whom they expected came. Instead, Lena came. She did not expect them. Surprise flit across her face. But she recovered and asked

'What do you want?'
'Some friends . . . Alfred, Kjell . . . They are not expecting me. I want to talk to them. Are they in?'

She had heard of Devaguru. She also knew that Alfred did not have a reasonable opinion of him.
However, she realized it would not be an excellent manner to shut the door in the face of someone who had come seeking a meeting.

'Please wait. I will ask boys.' Lena went in, and Alfred asked, 'who is it?'
'Tamils. That orator. He wants to talk to you.'
'Has that pig come here too?' Kjell shouted.
'Kjell, keep quiet. They have come to our house. There is basic civilized behavior. We can pretend to know nothing. Jon, am I not right?' She asked.
Jon said, 'you are right. Let them come in.'

Jon had not divulged to anyone about what he had accomplished. The Police believed that both houses have set on fire in the same mode. He also knew that they thought it could be the same group or an individual responsible for both burnings. Although he had cooperated with the other three friends in all matters, this was something he had kept to himself. He knew that a little girl had been burnt to death in the second incident that many condemned. Like a ball bouncing off a wall, Devaguru seeking a meeting with them made him feel small. He decided he would not reveal anything and act with care. Alfred swore, 'shit.'

'Alfred, keep quiet.'
'Madam's orders?' He mocked and fell silent.
Lena returned to the front door. They were still waiting there.
'Come in, please.'
'Thank You.'
'You're welcome.'

Both removed their jackets, hung them on the stand, and went in. there was silence in the room. Devaguru felt that this silence was due to the unexpected visitors.
Jon made room for Devaguru and Arjun to sit comfortably and went over to a corner and sat there.

'This was the target; the death was a child's suddenly a thorn embedded itself deeply in his heart.

'We are grateful for admitting us and allowing us to talk to you. I understand this as a reflection of your broadmindedness. I would like to speak with you. Will you please give me a few minutes of your time?'
'Speak,' Harald said.

'I am not very fluent in Norwegian. I trust you will not mind that. I did not come here to either complain about you or condemn you. I have only come to speak to fellow human beings about our difficulties and gain some measure of solace. Some people hate us, and they hate us because of our color. You know this. That is why I am speaking. I have no wish to hurt anyone. In my nature, it is to accept pain if it would give pleasure to others. I am nonviolent. One who believes in love and truth, this is an introduction about me.'

Devaguru paused. Nobody said anything. It seemed to him that they were keenly listening. He continued.

'While returning from work, I was waylaid, beaten up cruelly, and thrown on the street. I accepted that. I did not go to the Police. I understood they were trying to project a point of the issue by that brutal assault on me. You have every right to indicate your views. But still, I feel that the way chosen to do so was wrong. No one should suffer through me or my life. If my suffering benefits others, I am willing to accept that suffering. I am not a Christian, but I learned all these exalted lessons from his life and service. He suffered to redeem other people's sins.
If they have no faith in Christ's teaching, even as much as I have understood, what is the use of going to church every Sunday? I feel unfortunate that Christian civilization has sunk so low. Jesus Christ did not shed blood only for you. He cleared his blood for the sins of the whole of humankind.

To parents who had become citizens of Norway, in this land's peaceful and compassionate environment, my daughter Malathi was born. The joy I felt when she was born on this soil was not negligible. That needs bred humanitarians' concepts in this soil against the terrorism of the world. It was at the forefront in dissolving the poor-rich gap and affirming social justice. Held it in high esteem as the land where great people promote peace among nations of the world live.

It became famous for banning wrestling with the lofty intention of preventing physical injury, even in sports. The World's intellections are eager that the concepts of equality flourishing in this land should grow in every other country. It was in this land; burned my home because I was black. My tongue feels queasy to say that my child has burnt to cinders in that home's blazing inferno. If you had a daughter, who had burnt to death, how would your heart have grieved? Please cast aside the illusion of color prejudice and think with humanism?'

Devaguru tried to conceal the constriction in his voice.

'You have come to the wrong place,' Alfred yelled.
'Alfred!' Lena was shocked. She lowered her voice. Let him speak about his heartache. Have we no patience even to listen quietly for a short while?'
'Satan,' grumbled Alfred and fell silent.
'I am glad if I have come to the wrong place. Then I will be consoled to speak to people with human charity. I did not come here to accuse you. I will not abuse even those who burnt my house and murdered my child as criminals. They have done wrong due to ignorance. I would like to react through you; I wish that my voice would reach the conscience of those who have done wrong.

I used to be delighted at the way you show affection and care to dogs, cats, and other domestic pets. Those animals don't seem to have any prejudice based on color. It was God who created humankind. You believe that. So do I. Whose fault was it that humanity was born with differences of color, creed, race, and language? In which country did the idea of white supremacy arise. What happened to the civilizations of those before that? Is the dominance of white-skinned people eternal? What is the guarantee that it would not be the yellow-skinned race that would reign supreme in the next century?

Finally, please understand one thing. The island I was born in, Ceylon, is gorgeous. Its enchanting beauty is such as though a chunk has dropped from paradise. The rhythm of the sea waves on four sides, rivers that never run dry, hills, green forests, told groves, paddy fields, like many nature wonder. One could describe the scenic beauty without living Gautama Buddha, who taught humanism, the concept of love and equality of all humankind, lived five hundred years before Jesus. He was opposed to killing, inequality due to birth. He preached that a person should conquer greed, hatred, and ignorance and live. He taught that if the attributes of benevolence, compassion, and wisdom grew, tranquillity and peace would prevail. The Buddhist priests who vowed to follow these precepts encouraged and instigated the Tamils' massacre. How cruel is this? I could not live in that country where the Buddha sheds tears of blood and why I sought refuge in this country.
If the priests who conduct services in churches in this country head the gangs which burn children alive, this is not true, but imagine it once. We still live here with trust in the humanism of this land. To destroy this trust, I feel, is a betrayal of the country.

Even now, Christ's words come to mind. 'I was a stranger. You would not accept me. I was without clothes. You did not clothe me. I was sick and in jail. You did not inquire about me. I am truly saying what you did not give me' Please give me the privilege of living under the sacred love of Jesus Christ.'

Devaguru stood up and folded his hands together towards those seated there.

Arjun also rose. Lena came forward. 'Excuse me, please. One minute.'
'You have come to the wrong place. There is no one here as you think.'
'I am delighted. Is there anything wrong with my views?'
'No. not.'
'Then you will not object if I propagate these views?'
'No.'
'That is why I came. Thank you.'
'Don't think in your heart that we have connections with any activities against you. We have no connections; the judgment, in that case, was wrong.'
'I have no suspicion against anybody. I came in as a stranger. Let us part as friends.'
'I like your enthusiasm. Thank you.'
'Bye'
'Bye.'

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'I was afraid of it ending up in arguments, brother.' choked Arjun.
The car was in motion.
'When one is arguing about love and justice, a superpower will be there to protect him.'
'Superpower?'

‘Yes. Today it was Lena. It was her presence which normalized the situation. However, instead of reviewing past events, it is important to plan future events. You are also participating in the T.V. program presented by 'Vardø Ikke Vold forum.'’
‘Why did you give my name, brother?’
‘Why? Don’t you like to take part?’
‘It is not that. All these days, I have clashed with you.’
‘It is good to have opposition. It helps to review the principles. One thing I know. You have always been vocal on the side of justice. You are also fluent in Norwegian and involved in arts, and literary pursuits NRK (Norwegian Rikskringkating A/S) has agreed to televise another program. Dr. Lars has arranged through a friend of his to air our problems. He will tell us on Monday how much time we will allow. Arjun, you will be our representative.’
‘Brother, for your good heart. . .’ Arjun was lost for words.
‘The most appropriate person should be chosen and given the job he is qualified to do.’

Devaguru quoted from the Kural and calmly concentrated on his driving.

CHAPTER 16

THERE are many reasons for Devaguru's belief that Arjun will produce and present the program with artistic grace and utmost dedication.
He had assisted with the production of programs at the T.V. Station in Sri Lanka. He had also learned the Norwegian language earnestly and was well versed in it. It was his nature to take up any given matter as a challenge and make a success of it.

He did not want to make the program a group discussion. He believed that debating groups were entertaining to promote the participants' self-aggrandizement. He wanted new truths to present in the people's forum. He decided that Tamil music also should be subtly included. He hoped the program produced in Norwegian would be an experiment in paving the way for multi-culturalism.

He spent hours of tireless research in the libraries and the stores of files to make the show artistic and authentic. He conversed with the elderly citizens who gave him eyewitness accounts of Hitler's cruelties. He went two or three times to Oslo to get information and specific files at his own expense. He also took one month's leave from work to attend to the production full time. He detected many Tamils whose talents have never come to the fore. Devaguru sometimes wondered whether such great exertion was necessary and pleased at Arjun's wholehearted involvement.

Arjun won the total support of the Tamils. He consulted with the famous artists in Oslo and made necessary champs and improvements. There were great expectations regarding the Programme as Norwegian intellectuals and artists participated. Not only the papers but the preview had also stimulated the expectation.

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Finally, the day and hour the program was to be televised came.

There was excitement in that smell of the yellow house. Alfred and Lena still lived together despite their controversies. Alfred's friends Kjell, Jon, Harald visited as usual. After Malathi's untimely death, they kept a low profile. Also, Lena was keen to know more about the refugees living here since Devaguru's visit. It appeared to her that Devaguru's voice was the sound of truth. Jon had changed. He gave his opinions in a soft comment, and Kjell and Alfred acted as hardliners' voices. Kjell argued that they should not watch the program publicized as Arjun's production. Alfred mocked, 'Are these black pigs to preach to us?' They had turned the T.V. to watch the program at Lena's existence. Everyone started drinking liquor. Lena, too, drank beer. Jon did not feel like drinking alcohol.

Lars's family were eagerly sitting in front of the T.V. as they had acted in certain parts. Anita felt her friend's loss very much. Arjun said her T.V. presentation was poignantly moving.

Devaguru found it uncomfortable to sit with Nithya and watch the program. He went with Satkunam to the hostel, preferring to watch it with Arjun. He cherished a hope that this would keep bringing about a new harmony in the lives of the Tamils.

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The program began with the symbolic searching of a rose in the fire. That itself stirred different emotions in one's heart. Sang a sad refrain with a compatible orchestra playing while the production details and titles rolled in. It seems changed to a rose being tossed around in the sky and sea waves.

Like the turbulent ocean
The heart a quiver
Where on where doesn't then the journey?
Seeking the smile
Lost here awhile
The heart is entirely in motion.

That showed the rise of Nazi Germany in black and white in a background of lighting crisscrossing the sky. Saw the swastika with Hitler's stern, arrogant face dimly superimposed on it, his final settlement' for the Jews and the atrocities perpetrated on them were shown piece by piece. The honors they went through were culled from the old war news films and inserted with artistic insight. He was whipping the moral conscious. When of humankind it disappeared in a trice. The tongues of flame changed from black and white to natural color with Berlin's fall.

The Peoples weeping
became war
Again, came Hitler's roar

When sang the last stanza, one can dimly see the Lion flag in the background through the tongues of flame. That showed the 1983 black July atrocities in a compilation of photographs. Rare photographs had been painstakingly found and added. 'The Aryan lust of dominance has not died with Hitler. . . There is a new gospel deriving from it that is spreading over the soil of Sri Lanka.' heard Mr. Lars's voice. A profoundly sad song in it.

Refugees are hurrying into boats. Their faces are not evident in Men, Women, and Children's dark crowds, and the boats are bobbing up and down on the turbulent sea waves.

Teardrops shed by us
Have they changed the sea salty?
Is our life of darkness
The gospel of the almighty?

Bombs fall on the boats, and the boats are struggling to keep afloat. One boat capsizes. Through the song, a child's frightened wail hears. Then, only the waves with a rose tossed around on them, the scene freezes.

The blue seas give way to the blue skies. The sound of birds as they fly freely in the sky. The Norwegian Sky is the Scandinavian Airlines System plane that touches the runway. The city of Oslo is visible in the distance. The airport of Oslo is next. A young Tamil family, Father, Mother, a little girl, and an infant boy, arrive with new hopes and happiness.

Where was it lost
Where did we lose
We have come
Seeking a smile.

The scenes of Norwegian summer with little girls' laughter, among the rose gardens, the little girls are playing happily around. The whole screen is pervaded by Norwegian and Tamil girls' joyful environment talking, laughing, and playing together.

Norway's coastal village shown the beautiful village scenes expand to Norwegian folk music's background.

The scene shifts, and a small house and its living room are shows. In the Tamil family (those shown in the Oslo airport), the father teaches Bharathiar's songs. The mother is busy in the kitchen. The little boy is toddling around playing. The call bell sounds. The man opens the door. Dr. Lars and his family come in. there is a friendly atmosphere with everyone talking to each other and partaking in coffee.
Anita and the Tamil girl are playing together. As the sounds of their laughter slowly fade, the Swastika is being spray-painted on a blank wall. Only the wall and the hand that is spreading the paint are visible. Again, the location of the joyous family. 'We have gained this new life of peace due to this country's compassionate people. Our children will always be grateful for your benevolence. They will work for the eminence and prosperity of this country.' The father of the family says in Norwegian. Then he asks his daughter to sing a song. The little girl beautifully sings a Norwegian song. When the scene dissolves, the wall sprayed with Swastika appears as the next scene. Three masks Norwegian are streaming the image of a pig. Besides it, 'Black pigs.' Get out of our country!' is written in large letters in Norwegian. 'These black pigs should burn!' a harsh voice shouting. It turns out that the pig wholly grasped as a symbol

The scene changes again to the sounds of laughter of children playing in a rose garden. The Tamil child who sang a sang in Norwegian and her friend show. Their happy conversation is not audible against the background of Norwegian music. Each little girl plucks a rose from the bush, and both see the roses held against their cheeks in close-up scenes. The friends walk forward, and the Norwegian girl bids farewell to the Tamil girl. The Tamil girl kisses the rose flower, keeps it by the side of her pillow, and closes her eyes.

In a rose,
there are thorns.
Has the thorn become the rose?

Withering flowers
there are in life.
Would life itself wither?

The scene of the child's slumber becomes out of focus, and masked people are dancing like devils with live torches in their hands. One man's torch comes forward, and while receding, a burning house sees. The fire brigade is fighting the blaze. A firefighter comes through the abating conflagration carrying a burnt little girl in his arms.

'How many young roses are to scorch for the sake of color prejudices and racism?' The question asks, and the show draws to a close.

Devaguru's lips trembled with emotion. He turned his head and gazed out of the window, not wishing the others to see his tears. The crowd assembled in the hostel was silent, lost for words to praise Arjun, who had produced the show beautifully.

Lena did not bother to hide the tears rolling down her cheeks. She felt that a good cry alone would ease her heavy heart.

They started the next program on the T.V. Unexpectedly, Jon got up and switched it off. He knelt in front of it, visualizing it as an altar 'Christ. Please, let these roses have a positive future.' Lena joined him in his prayers.

- THE END -